APULEIUS
AND ANTONINE ROME

HISTORICAL ESSAYS

KEITH BRADLEY

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For Nicholas and Luke

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CONTENTS

Preface ix

Acknowledgments xiii

Abbreviations xv

1 Law, Magic, and Culture in Apuleius's *Apology* 3

2 Contending with Conversion: Reflections on the Re-formation of Lucius the Ass 23

3 *Romanitas* and the Roman Family: The Evidence of Apuleius's *Apology* 41

4 Animalizing the Slave: The Truth of Fiction 59

5 Fictive Families: Family and Household in Apuleius's *Metamorphoses* 79

6 Sacrificing the Family: Christian Martyrs and Their Kin 104

7 Apuleius and Carthage 126

8 Appearing for the Defence: Apuleius on Display 147

9 Apuleius and the Sub-Saharan Slave Trade 164

10 Apuleius and Jesus 181

11 Lucius and Isis: History in Apuleius's *Metamorphoses* 205

12 Apuleius and Adultery in the Age of the Antonines 229

Appendix 257

Supplement of Images 265

Notes 283

Bibliography 349

Index 385

PREFACE

This book brings together a number of historical essays about the Latin author Apuleius of Madauros and the second-century Roman world to which he belonged. They are the product of a long-standing interest in Apuleius prompted in the first instance by a fascination with his *Apology* and the possibilities I thought I once saw in the work for investigating the life, society, and culture of a particular region of the Roman empire in the high imperial age. My original intention was to attempt a sociocultural study of the *Apology*, the speech, or a version of the speech, Apuleius made when defending himself in court in Sabratha in Tripolitania in the middle of the second century on charges of practising magic; but for reasons both personal and professional that project was abandoned. Instead I offer here the residue, a sequence of self-contained essays composed while exploring the initial possibilities. Some are new, but most have been previously published. I present the new and re-present the old, the latter lightly revised and amended, in the hope that as a collection the sum might be greater than its parts and contribute thereby to the study of Apuleius and the world in which he lived. The need to preserve the integrity of each item inevitably results in some duplication of material from one essay to another, for which I ask the reader's forbearance. I am aware that re-presenting might seem to some extent self-indulgent.

The essays appear in their original order of composition and deal with a variety of topics not confined to starting points in the *Apology*. When I began to examine Apuleius's speech, it proved impossible not to engage with his other literary compositions as well, especially *The Golden Ass*, or *Metamorphoses*, the serio-comic story of a man magically transformed into an ass and the adventures and misadventures he has before recovering his human form. This meant in turn discovering how appealing Apuleius has

become to contemporary literary critics; I frequently refer accordingly to the often absorbing, and sometimes helpful, contributions literary scholars have made to Apuleian studies. My interests, however, are historical, by which I mean that I am concerned with questions of how Apuleius's writings reveal the society and culture that produced them, or, more broadly, of how works of Latin literature permit something of the Roman past to be understood. I assume from the outset that a work of literature is in the first instance a historical document from which perspectives may be opened on the society in which its author lived and wrote, and my essential object is to explore those perspectives. I have no interest in the notion that history is simply a set of facts and dates, a notion that underlies certain studies of Apuleius that tend to deny his works historical meaning. Instead I approach Apuleius's writings as expressions of the age in which they came into being and attempt to recover something of what they express.

Recovery is a key concern. It is a commonplace that the purpose of history is to explain change over time from the record of past events. In ancient history, however, especially in ancient social and cultural history, this is a far from straightforward enterprise. The rise and fall of Rome's Mediterranean empire, the general shape of Roman history, can be understood with relative ease (I stress 'relative'). But with social and cultural matters the situation is different. The problem is one of evidence and verification. The materials that remain from Roman antiquity present overwhelmingly the views of an educated, socially privileged minority, and the views therefore of the lower sectors of society, the mass of the population, are very difficult to penetrate. Moreover, whether in quantity or quality or type, the materials are hardly ever comparable across the various periods of the thousand years of history involved, and effective comparison with one era and another is for the most part close to impossible. As P.A. Brunt succinctly put it: 'Unfortunately there are all too many parts of Greek and Roman history for which the evidence, or what passes as evidence, is too meagre, conflicting or dubiously authentic to warrant virtually certain conclusions.' To write the history of social institutions and mentalities in which change can be convincingly identified and accounted for is a formidable task.

It is with the more modest subject of circumstantial recovery, therefore, of capturing the socially and culturally specific in the age of Apuleius, that my essays are concerned. Much of what I have to offer is about imagining empathetically the historical context in which Apuleius lived, and the essays are, quite literally, attempts to revivify some aspects of the Antonine past to which Apuleius's writings provide access. My approach is in the broadest of senses historicizing, by which I mean that the historical meaning of Apuleius's texts may be sought through any apposite type of illustration. But I use the word 'meaning' advisedly, conscious that it is an indeterminate

category to be understood in a multiplicity of ways, and all suggestions made remain of course provisional.

One idiosyncrasy of my work (among many) is that I use a minimal number of endnotes and frequently consolidate in them, almost in the form of commentary, a multitude of references. My purpose in so doing is to spare readers the countless interruptions and distractions of minutiae that blemish, to my mind, much modern academic writing, and to offer instead a reasonably continuous and interesting text. Specialists are free to pursue the details in the notes as they wish. If they do so, they will see that I have tried to take account of as much relevant modern scholarship as possible in my investigations (though doubtless there is much that I have missed), and that despite occasional disagreements, my obligations to the researches of others are profound.

Apuleius was a prolific author. Only a portion of everything that he wrote has survived, and the relative chronology of the extant works remains obscure. I am inclined to think, as do most, that the *Apology* precedes the *Metamorphoses* and the collection of extracts from his epideictic speeches known as the *Florida*. But nothing is certain. Whether the extant philosophical writings attributed to him are authentically Apuleian is another matter of controversy. I see no reason to be unduly sceptical, the case of the *Asclepius* apart.

Of more interest than technical issues of date and composition, Apuleius's writings provoke thought about various features of Roman history of enduring appeal: social relations, especially relations within the family and household; religiosity, in all its diversity and complexity; and the patterns of culture shared, or contested, between metropolis and province. These are the topics on which I dwell. With the *Apology* and *Florida* I pay special attention to the regional, physical, and intellectual elements of life in Roman North Africa that I consider important for their comprehension. At times I deal with the works directly (chapters 1, 3, 7, 8), but on other occasions I take a deliberately circuitous route and introduce material, fascinating in its own right, that while tangential is helpful nonetheless for understanding them (chapters 9, 10). With the *Metamorphoses* I concentrate on religious themes, especially the problematical subject of the central character's experience of conversion, as it is often called (chapters 2, 11); and on items that concern the history of slavery and the history of the family (chapters 4, 5, 12). Here too I sometimes pursue topics which are digressive, but which I again find valuable in a broadly comparative way for understanding Apuleius and his world (chapters 6, 10). The essays are discrete but interconnected, and it is because of the ways in which they relate to one another that I have kept them in the original order of composition. Ultimately my purpose is to find history in literature, and to do so by taking for granted that Apuleius's writings were written in contexts of time and space that were once real and are

now to some degree recoverable. I am convinced that the ancient historian's most important function is to reconstitute what A.N. Sherwin-White once called 'the texture of the ancient world,' and I hope in what follows to weave together a few of its many threads.

It is a pleasure to acknowledge the help I have received during the course of my studies. My interest in Apuleius began at the University of Victoria, and I am deeply grateful to the Killam Foundation and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada for a succession of research awards held there that allowed me to pursue my interest. To be able to see Roman Tripolitania was just one of the many benefits the awards made possible. I am equally grateful to the University of Notre Dame for having made available the resources of the Eli J. and Helen Shaheen Chair of Classics, the position I am currently privileged to hold, which in allowing me to complete my studies have also given me other remarkable experiences of the Mediterranean world known to Apuleius.

Much of what appears in the book has been presented in the form of lectures and addresses at universities, colleges, and academic conferences far too numerous to list individually. I wish nonetheless to thank all those who have invited me to speak on Apuleius for their kindness and generosity, and to say that in all cases the responses of the audiences concerned, as I trust will be perceptible, were very much appreciated.

At a personal level, I am obliged to Jonathan Edmondson for his support of my project from the beginning and for the commitment that has made it a reality; to Susan Treggiari for her gracious encouragement of my efforts in scholarship over many years (and not in Apuleian studies alone); to Samuel Scully for his sustaining friendship and counsel, likewise over a long period of time; and to Catherine Schlegel for sharing with me her vast knowledge of classical literature.

Above all, I must thank my wife, Diane Boyle Bradley, my travelling companion in the Roman Mediterranean and my companion in life, without whom, patiently enduring, nothing could be attained that would be worthwhile; and my sons Nicholas Bradley and Luke Bradley, who in our many family conversations about history and literature have contributed more than they will ever know to the pages that follow. I trust that all three will accept these words as an expression, no matter how inadequate, of the many debts of loving gratitude I owe to them.

KRB
Scribebam mense Ianuario
anno mmxi apud uniuersitatem
Dominae Nostrae auctor non actor

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The texts of Apuleius cited are those of Vallette 1971 [1924] for the *Apology* and *Florida*; Robertson and Vallette 1995 [1940], 1992 [1941], and 1985 [1945] for the *Metamorphoses*; and Beaujeu 2002 [1973] for the philosophical works and fragments. The translations cited are those of Hunink for the *Apology* (in Harrison, Hilton, Hunink 2001), Hilton for the *Florida* (in Harrison, Hilton, Hunink 2001); and Kenney 1998 and Hanson 1989 for the *Metamorphoses* (sometimes slightly adapted). Dates are AD unless otherwise stated.

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ABBREVIATIONS

References to classical authors and titles of journals follow standard conventions, usually those of the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 3rd ed., ed. S. Hornblower and A.J.S. Spawforth (Oxford, 1996). Note also the following:

AE	*L'Année épigraphique*. Paris, 1888–.
BM Cat. Sculpture	A.H. Smith, *A Catalogue of Sculpture in the Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities, British Museum*. London, 1890–1904.
CIG	*Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum*. Berlin, 1828–77.
CIL	*Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*. Berlin, 1863–.
CLE	F. Buecheler, ed., *Carmina Latina Epigraphica*. Leipzig, 1895–1926.
DT	A. Audollent, ed., *Defixionum Tabellae*. Paris, 1904.
FIRA	S. Riccobono et al., eds., *Fontes Iuris Romani Antejustiniani*. 2nd ed. Florence, 1968.
IG	*Inscriptiones Graecae*. Berlin, 1873–.
ILAfr.	R. Cagnat and A. Merlin, eds., *Inscriptions latines d'Afrique*. Paris, 1923.
ILAlg.	S. Gsell, ed., *Inscriptions latines de l'Algérie I*. Paris, 1922; H.-G. Pflaum, ed., *Inscriptions latines de l'Algérie II*. Paris, 1958, 1976.
ILS	H. Dessau, ed., *Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae*. Berlin, 1892–1916.
Inscr. It.	*Inscriptiones Italiae*. Rome, 1931–.
IPT	G. Levi della Vida and M. Amadasi Guzzo, eds., *Iscrizioni puniche della Tripolitania (1927–1967)*. Rome, 1987.

IRT	J.M. Reynolds and J.B. Ward-Perkins, eds., *The Roman Inscriptions of Tripolitania*. Rome and London, 1952.
LTUR	E.M. Steinby, ed., *Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae*. Rome, 1993–2000.
PDM	*Papyri Demoticae Magicae* (= Betz 1992).
PECS	R. Stillwell et al., *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Classical Sites*. Princeton, 1976.
PGM	K. Preisendanz, ed., *Papyri Graecae Magicae*. Stuttgart, 1928–31.
PIR^2	E. Groag, A. Stein, et al., eds., *Prosopographia Imperii Romani*. 2nd ed. Berlin, 1933–.
RE	G. Wissowa, W. Kroll, et al., eds., *Paulys Realencyklopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*. Berlin, 1893–.
RIB	R.G. Collingwood and R.P. Wright, eds., *The Roman Inscriptions of Britain I.* Oxford, 1965.
RIC	H. Mattingly and E. Sydenham, eds., *The Roman Imperial Coinage II, III*. London, 1926, 1930.
SEG	*Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*. Leiden, 1923–.
Tab. Vind.	A.K. Bowman and J.D. Thomas, eds., *The Vindolanda Writing Tablets: Tabulae Vindolandenses II, III*. London, 1994, 2003.

APULEIUS AND ANTONINE ROME: HISTORICAL ESSAYS

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1

Law, Magic, and Culture in Apuleius's *Apology*

In 158/9 at Tripolitanian Sabratha in Africa Proconsularis, Apuleius of Madauros, the author of the *Golden Ass*, was tried before the proconsul Claudius Maximus for having allegedly practised magic in order to bewitch and entice into marriage a wealthy, fortyish widow named Pudentilla. His accuser was Sicinius Aemilianus, a brother of Pudentilla's first husband, who was determined to keep control of Pudentilla's substantial fortune, acquired in large part from the dead brother and his father, within the family of the Sicinii. The outcome of the trial is unknown. But Apuleius defended himself with a speech whose rhetorical and stylistic brilliance has convinced most of its readers that he must have been acquitted. The speech, the *Apology*, trivializes and demolishes the allegations so completely that the issue, it seems, cannot be in doubt: the rationality of law and the legal process must, surely, have prevailed over the irrationality of magic and the essential absurdity of the charges.[1]

It is with the interplay between legal rationality and magical irrationality that I am chiefly concerned in this opening essay, particularly as it applies to the administration of Roman justice. On its surface the *Apology* evinces a stable and secure world, the world of a monolithic Roman Empire where the impartial rule of Roman law is everywhere unquestionable. But beneath the surface a different image of Roman imperial society can, I think, be glimpsed, one that is less positive and less confident, but also one that is more historically accurate. To bring that image to life, I explore here the contextual framework of Apuleius's trial from three points of view, the legal, especially in its physical setting, the magical, and the intellectual. My implicit general objective is to illustrate the importance of the *Apology* as a document of social and cultural history.[2]

I

First, to reconstitute the physical circumstances in which Apuleius's trial took place is to learn something of the impact of Roman law on a remote provincial community, as also to capture something of the immediate, and intensely agonistic, character of the trial situation.

In the middle of the second century, Sabratha was about to reach its apogee as an imperial city and had a certain architectural splendour. But it was not a site of great distinction. A North African port city that had come over the previous century to reflect its growing commercial prosperity in the construction of a complex of public buildings, so that with its marbled forum, temples, and senate house it had very much the disciplined, almost anonymous appearance of any successful western Roman city, Sabratha was, nonetheless, a community of perhaps only 30,000 or so inhabitants – a population that would not fill the Colosseum at Rome – and little more than a provincial backwater. If recovery from earthquake in the Flavian era was well in evidence, even in Tripolitania the city was a less imposing community than Lepcis Magna to the east. The finest of its public buildings, the grand theatre, which among its decorations was to contain a prominent relief representing the concordant union of Sabratha and Rome, was yet to be built.[3]

Sabratha, however, was important enough to serve as an assize centre, a place where the Roman provincial governor appeared from time to time to render judgments in legal cases brought to him by local and neighbouring petitioners. An increase in prestige could be expected. The residents of Sabratha knew that the dispensation of Roman justice was associated with one of their public buildings in particular, a large rectangular basilica surrounded by colonnades that lay immediately off the forum to the south and that measured precisely 48.5 metres along its east-west axis and 26 metres north to south. As visitors crossed the main entrance of this impressive hall, their eyes automatically fell on a sequence of rooms on the opposite side, the chief element of which was an area some 11 metres square marked by an apse on its southern side. Here there was a tribunal, a raised platform of the sort from which Roman magistrates and other officials traditionally administered justice, a symbol of the law and order on which Rome's empire had been built and by which it was now being maintained. Physically elevated, it required disputants to look up to their judge – essential for eye contact – and to modify appropriately their oratorical gestures if they were to be rhetorically effective. Most important of all, the tribunal communicated a sense of the elevated dignity of Roman law.[4]

Roman law shaped and conditioned the daily lives of the local population in numerous ways, as the *Apology* itself well illustrates. At a late stage of

the speech (*Apol*. 88.3), explaining why he and Pudentilla had married in the country, not the city, Apuleius points out that the Augustan *Lex Julia de maritandis ordinibus* did not specify precisely where marriages were to take place, a point that is surely meant ironically or sarcastically. Yet the mere mention of the law reveals how in ordinary social intercourse the lives of citizens on the fringes of empire were quietly regulated by legal directives or conventions that came from the centre. The same is true of allusions Apuleius makes to the appointment of a *tutor* for a minor child whose father has died (*Apol*. 68.6), to the official registration of the birth of a newly born child (*Apol*. 89.2), to the designation of a guardian for a woman (*Apol*. 101.6). The long-term corollary was the enrichment of the Roman ruling class by elite provincials who had fully assimilated the culture of Rome the law represented, a well-documented process illustrated here by the consulship in the mid-160s of L. Aemilius Frontinus, who was probably a kinsman of Pudentilla, and the achievement of senatorial status by a scion of the Sicinii, Q. Sicinius Clarus Pontianus, who is attested as governor of Thrace in the early third century. When the Roman governor, however, wearing official dress and accompanied by a retinue of advisers, his very presence connoting status and power, took from time to time his seat on the tribunal in the basilica at Sabratha, Roman law was not so much a quiet influence as a living reality, visible and audible – though not too audible. This is how Apuleius evokes the magisterial presence in another work (*Flor*. 9.11–12), comparing the modulated voice of the dignitary with the racket made by his strutting herald:

> The proconsul … speaks quietly and with frequent pauses, sits while he speaks, and often reads from a written document. This is only natural. For the garrulous voice of the crier is the voice of a hired servant, the words read by the proconsul from a written document constitute a judgement, which, once read, may not have one letter added to it or taken away, but so soon as it is delivered, is set down in the provincial records.[5]

Within sight of the sea, and with the commotion of the forum in the background, it was from the tribunal in the basilica at Sabratha in all probability that Claudius Maximus tried Apuleius. The process was straightforward. Sicinius Aemilianus brought charges against Apuleius, including at first an accusation of murder, though this was quickly dropped. Four or five days later, however, Aemilianus proceeded with an indictment of magic, which he laid in the name of his nephew, Pudentilla's younger son, Sicinius Pudens, and he drew on the services of an advocate, Tannonius Pudens, to plead his case before the proconsul. Apuleius, who can have had only a few days in

which to prepare, spoke in his own defence. His evidence creates the impression that the case was brought on hurriedly, that it was almost irresponsibly contrived. Neither he nor Aemilianus were residents of Sabratha, but of the third Tripolitanian city, Oea, also a small centre, from where Apuleius had travelled precisely because of Claudius Maximus's impending arrival in the assize centre where he was to represent his wife in another legal matter. Aemilianus was there probably as a result of this case, too, but he seems to have seized the opportunity to attack Apuleius instead. Yet despite this impression of haste, Apuleius's defence implies that the case was heard dispassionately and with all the rationality to be expected in a local community where the rule of Roman law, in a city either now or very soon to be an official Roman colony, was so ideologically important.[6]

In principle, Roman law was available to all provincial citizens. Implementation, however, was erratic and depended on such variables as the vagaries of travel and the human inclinations of the Roman governor, who within the confines of his province, had almost unlimited powers. As early as the age of Augustus, the governor had seemed to some tantamount to a king, while to a Christian writer of the third century he was virtually God-like. He could confer honours and influence upon individuals and communities, allot material rewards and benefits, promote the ambitions of the prominent eager to advance their careers within the wider imperial world, control access to the emperor. He was attended when he travelled by a retinue that often included the governor's wife and their personal slaves, his legates, quaestor and *amici*, a military escort, and a battery of administrative assistants: *accensi*, *scribae*, *lictores*, *uiatores*, *praecones*, *haruspices*. Thus, for instance, when P. Antius Orestes, the proconsul of Macedonia, visited the sanctuary of the Great Gods at Samothrace on 1 May 165, he was accompanied by four friends, various staff members and soldiers, a dozen or so personal and some six other slaves, a party altogether of at least thirty individuals, large enough to provide safety on the empire's dangerous roads. The governor's arrival in an outpost such as Sabratha was consequently a momentous event for which preparations could not be too carefully made. The governor was expected to avoid financially overburdening his province, but accommodation, food, transportation, everything that he and his companions might require had to be provided by the local community – a lavish display of ceremonial greeting was essential in the first place – and if special favours were anticipated local responsibilities could not be neglected. In theory the governor's court was accessible to petitioners of every social rank. Yet the governor was under no obligation to hear all the cases that locals wished to present to him, and petitioners were well aware that he was open to influence. Negotiating a path to the governor's tribunal was indeed a tension-laden affair, very different in reality from the prosaic rules of Roman provincial administration

considered in the abstract. Sicinius Aemilianus was able to negotiate successfully, and thereby initiated a dramatic contest that was not motivated by the pursuit of wealth alone. Apuleius, however, may have gained an immediate advantage by persuading Claudius Maximus to bring the case on quickly.[7]

At the root of the issue lay a struggle for Pudentilla's riches, the real reason, Apuleius's enemies contended, why magic had been practised. Pudentilla's fortune is alluded to frequently in the *Apology*, as when Apuleius refers (*Apol*. 93.3–5) to the farmlands, the house, the crops, the livestock, and the 400 slaves – just a portion of Pudentilla's property – that he had at one stage persuaded his wife to make over to her sons, to show to all concerned that he was not a fortune-hunter. In the archaeological record, a surprisingly large number of olive presses is in evidence in Tripolitania, a firm indication of the economic centrality of olive production in the region, which supported an export trade in olive oil for which the coastal cities of Sabratha, Oea, and Lepcis served as distribution points to overseas markets. The rural hinterlands (*territoria*) of Oea and Lepcis extended across the fertile coastal plains into the Gebel to the south-west, where there were riches for the taking, as border disputes between the cities suggest. Apuleius's reference to the oil that Pudentilla's farms produced, and so by implication the wheat, barley, and wine as well, is suitably confirmed. Typical of the local Tripolitanian elite, Pudentilla was the very direct beneficiary of massive economic prosperity and exploitation.[8]

Economic factors aside, however, the charges of magic were important in their own right and far more threatening to Apuleius personally than the surface tenor of his speech suggests. Roman law recognized that magical power, like the powers of the gods at large, of which magic was just one expression, could be used to either human advantage or disadvantage. The harm of magic was to be resisted, and ever since the creation of the Twelve Tables, law had been used to suppress antisocial magical practices and their practitioners. Magicians were 'enemies of the Roman order,' subject potentially to capital penalties upon conviction. For Apuleius, a figure of some eminence, not execution at least but exile and stigmatic loss of status might be anticipated if Claudius Maximus found himself convinced by the claims of Sicinius Aemilianus. Much was at stake, therefore, from the moment the proconsul agreed to entertain the accusations against him.[9]

II

Second, to contextualize the specific claims against Apuleius is to heighten the sense of the tension-laden and the dramatic, and also to bring out the element of the irrational, as the all-pervasiveness of magical belief and practice in Roman society is seen. I consider here one charge only, but for the purpose at hand it is enough.

The first allegation against Apuleius was that he had procured from some fishermen certain types of fish which he used to manufacture love charms in order to induce Pudentilla to fall in love with him. The charge sounds preposterous, and Apuleius was determined to prove to his audience in the basilica at Sabratha that it was. He does not deny purchasing fish; that was a matter of fact. But he has a logical explanation of his actions that demonstrates beyond doubt, it seems, the absence of any sinister or socially harmful conduct or even motive on his part. First, while there is evidence in poets such as Virgil, whom Apuleius can quote, that magical charms are associated with the world of the erotic, fish are not a raw material from which love charms are made. Indeed, there is no association between fish and the practice of magic at all. Second, as a philosopher following in the footsteps of Aristotle, Plato, Theophrastus, and others, Apuleius has a scholarly interest in natural history, and he has composed books on the history and classification of fish, in both Greek and Latin, extracts from which he can have read in court. His interests are purely scientific, and he claims to have been the first to translate from Greek into Latin the names of certain species. Third, his scientific interest is not merely academic but has a practical end in view, the discovery of medicinal properties in fish that will be of benefit to humanity at large (*Apol*. 29–41).[10]

The defence is impeccable: Apuleius is an altruistic scientist, not a threat to society, who has simply been misunderstood. The argument is one that Apuleius's contemporary, the medical writer Galen, could have supported: Galen investigated the nutritional and medical qualities of a whole range of fish species and set out his findings in the treatise *On the Properties of Foodstuffs*, prescribing there methods of healthful food preparation even as he remained alert to the dangers from pollution in major cities such as Rome. His empirical studies were precisely the kind to which Apuleius lays claim. An impeccable defence, however, is not necessarily the truth, and Apuleius's admission that love charms are the common stock of poets opens up in fact a whole set of associations between magic and the erotic that extend from the heights of great poetry to the depths of the binding-spells that men and women inscribed on lead tablets and carefully buried in the earth as a way of meeting their erotic desires. A product of high culture such as Horace's Priapic satire (*Sat*. 1.8) on the witches of the Esquiline, who 'work on the minds of men with magic songs and potions,' may not demand to be read as a mirror of social reality. But it is rather different with a text of the following sort, a spell from third-century Hadrumentum, not too far away from Tripolitania, that has no pretence to anything but the literal. Domitiana speaks:

I invoke you, the great god, eternal and more than eternal, almighty and exalted above the exalted ones. I invoke you, who created the heaven and the sea. I invoke

you, who set aside the righteous, to bring Urbanus, to whom Urbana gave birth, and unite him with Domitiana, to whom Candida gave birth, loving, tormented, and sleepless with desire and love for her, so that he may take her into his house as his wife … I invoke you, great, everlasting and almighty god, whom the heavens and the valleys fear throughout the whole earth … unite them in marriage and as spouses for all the time of their lives. Make him as her obedient slave, so that he will desire no other woman or maiden apart from Domitiana alone and will keep her as his spouse for all the time of their lives. Now, now! Quickly, quickly![11]

It is from the evidence of spells like this, or from finger-ring charms, or from random statements in literary sources – 'arrows drawn out of a body and not allowed to touch the ground act as a love-charm upon those under whom when in bed they have been placed' (Plin. *HN* 28.34) – that the ubiquity of magical belief and practice in the Roman empire, especially in the domain of the erotic, is revealed. Magic for many was a coping mechanism, a way of dealing with ordinary human anxieties and emotions that has left its traces everywhere. From infancy all through their lives, for example, people in antiquity wore amulets to give protection against or cures for all manner of ailments, which means that everyone in the ordinary round of daily life was constantly being bombarded with visual reminders of the presence in their midst of magical forces. Even the highly intelligent and rational doctor Soranus (*Gyn*. 3.42), not far removed in time from Apuleius, conceded that amulets were useful as placebos. Belief in the efficacy of magic was strong, and even if misfortune prevailed, belief did not necessarily waver: it was not the system that was at fault but the practitioner, who must have erred in the conduct of the rites. Where medicine was concerned, the dividing line between the rational and the irrational was very narrow, and Apuleius, despite, or rather because of, his scholarly knowledge, knew this himself. He must also have known that amulets were worn for erotic purposes – a piece of an elephant's trunk mixed with the red earth of Lemnos, or, to guarantee immediate success, the anus of a hyena worn on the left arm. There was, it emerges, nothing implausible in Sicinius Aemilianus's claim that Apuleius had contrived to secure marriage to Pudentilla through magic. The charge came from a highly recognizable social and religious context in which women as well as men were fully implicated.[12]

Apuleius's contention that fish were not associated with magical practices was false. Cataloguing the ceremonies of the Parentalia in the *Fasti* (2.577–82), Ovid describes a magical rite involving a fish whose object was to prevent hostile gossip: an old woman, honouring the goddess Tacita, roasts in fire the head of a sprat (*maena*) which she has sewn up, secured with

pitch, pierced with a bronze needle, and over which she finally pours wine. How frequently this spell was cast it is impossible to know, but the connection is clear. Again, in a section of the *Natural History* dealing with the medicinal properties of plant and animals, the elder Pliny devotes a whole book (*HN* 32) to remedies derived from sea creatures, some of which further the magical association. Fish amulets will help women in childbirth and prevent miscarriage – the sting, for instance, taken from a live stingray (*HN* 32.133). A dolphin's tooth worn as an amulet will relieve infants of their childish terrors, and one of crab's eyes, worn around the neck, will cure ophthalmia (*HN* 32.137; 32.74). A starfish, smeared with the blood of a fox and fastened to a doorway with a bronze nail, will protect a house against harmful spells (*HN* 32.44). And these are items, incidentally, distinct from others attributed to the Magi, for whom Pliny commonly expresses disdain because their beliefs are beyond belief (*HN* 32.55; 32.72; 32.115–16). Also to take into account is the potent evidence of the so-called Greek magical papyri, a collection of spells and rituals from Hellenistic and Roman Egypt variously written in Greek, Demotic, and Coptic. In a spell intended to establish a relationship with the god Helios in which the divinity is invoked in a number of different hourly forms, the jellyfish appears as the form Helios takes in the sixth hour and the crayfish as one of the forms for the seventh hour. In a ritual to make inquiry of the Sun, the boy to be used as a medium has to have his eyes covered with an ointment made, among other things, from two river fish, still alive, called *buri*.[13]

Almost anything from the natural world could help control the uncontrollable and relieve psychological, if not physical, stress, and inevitably therefore there were fish amulets for love-magic. The *echeneis*, or *remora*, a small rock fish notorious for slowing down ships by clinging to their hulls also, according to Pliny (*HN* 9.79), had a reputation for supplying love charms; the sea horse, worn on the arm, was an aphrodisiac, but the gall of a live electric ray, attached to the genitals, was an antaphrodisiac. From the magical papyri, in a procedure to induce a woman to have sexual intercourse with a man, while the spell is chanted the man is to rub on his genitals an ointment made from honey, a crow's egg, the juice of the plant crow's foot, and the gall of an electric eel. Then there is a love spell involving a specially prepared oil and a black fish from the Nile. This is what is done:

> When the lunar month occurs, you should bring a black Nile fish measuring nine fingers, its eyes variegated in color …; you should put it into (the) oil for two days … When the two days have passed you should arise at dawn. You should go to a garden. You should bring a vine shoot that has not yet formed grapes. You should lift it in your left hand; you should put it in your right hand. It should amount to seven

fingers in length. You should take it to your house; you should bring the fish up out of the oil; you should tie it by its tail with a strip of flax; you should hang it up by the head on the vine; and you should place the thing containing oil under it for three days until the fish pours out by drops downwards that which is in it, while the vessel which is under it is on a new brick. When the three days have passed, you should bring it down. You should embalm it with myrrh, natron, and byssus. You should put it in a hidden place or in your house. You should spend two more days reciting to the oil, making seven days. You should keep it. When you wish to make it do its work, you should anoint your phallus and your face and you should lie with the woman to whom you will do it.[14]

This is all beyond belief, one might think. But a spell of attraction involving a river crab, to be used for inflicting sickness or other harm on a victim, or for sending dreams or for revealing the meaning of dreams, is said to have been revealed, in person, by a certain Pachrates, the prophet of Heliopolis, to the Roman emperor Hadrian, who was so impressed by its efficacy that he doubled Pachrates' salary. The story is not necessarily true, but the explicit reference to Hadrian injects a certain sense of plausibility into the Egyptian evidence, especially when the Pancrates of Lucian is recalled, an Egyptian magician and holy man from Memphis whose wonder-working Lucian (*Philops*. 33–6) could describe at some length. Against this background, it is not difficult to understand how the fish, *ichthus*, was contemporaneously becoming a symbol of a new Christian magic, nor is it remarkable that a Roman provincial governor like Claudius Maximus might well be expected to include a sorcerer among his entourage.[15]

If, then, fish had magical properties, did Apuleius deliberately lie? The question is impossible to answer, but given the impressive knowledge of magical practices that the author of the *Metamorphoses* commanded, not to mention the history of the Magi paraded in the *Apology* (25.5–26.4), his contention is certainly suspicious. And even if they lacked the arcane knowledge of Ovid, Pliny, and Apuleius himself, many of those who listened to Apuleius in Sabratha must have known so, not least as the magical papyri might suggest. All around them, moreover, were visual signs of the magical properties of the marine world that could not be missed, signs that took the form of mosaic decorations on fountains, baths, houses, and other highly visible structures. Both realistic and fantastic marine subjects were among the most popular forms of mosaic decoration in the North African provinces, with representations of fish placed on thresholds to ward off evil. Together with other emblems, such images were especially used to repel the ever-present gaze of the Evil Eye, as were representations of what have been termed 'pisciform phalli.' Mosaics collocating many different species of fish,

conventional and numerous throughout the Roman world, allow indeed a sense to emerge that sea creatures were objects of mystery and fascination, strange and beguiling despite their function as sources of decorative pleasure. From Zliten, near Lepcis, a floor mosaic illustrating the Seasons is a particularly apt example, with two panels displaying varied assemblages of fish of a sort that Apuleius could well have seen locally, both as they were brought directly from the sea and as they were portrayed in art in villas of the type with which he will naturally have been familiar.[16]

The elder Pliny stated that 'in Africa nobody decides on anything without first saying 'Africa,' whereas among all other peoples a man prays first for the approval of the gods' (*HN* 28.24: *in Africa nemo destinat aliquid nisi praefatus Africam, in ceteris uero gentibus deos ante obtestatus ut uelint*). It has been suggested accordingly that there was in North Africa a strong preoccupation with averting the forces of evil through magical means, though whether Africans were more devoted to the magical than other ancient Mediterranean peoples it is obviously impossible to know. In Tripolitania, reliefs from the farms of the Gebel and the pre-desert areas show the Tanit symbol and other apotropaic phallic symbols of Punic origin independent of the Greco-Roman evidence, and a site elsewhere has produced unique evidence of a potter's workshop specializing in spells. At a minimum, there is a strong discrepancy between Apuleius's bold assertion about the unmagical associations of fish, on the one hand, and the reality of the mosaic and related evidence in a relevant local context, on the other. Fear of evil was palpable, a vital element of mentality that for many was better accommodated by magic than by the rituals of conventional Roman religion, no matter how prominently displayed and promoted through sculpture and other artistic media officially sanctioned rites in Roman Africa were. The allegations against Apuleius were far more serious and pressing than they seem, and given the inadequacies of his argument in this one example, a defence that went beyond the purely rational may well have been needed.[17]

III

Third, to assess the presentation of high intellectualism in the *Apology* is to understand how Apuleius based his defence not (necessarily) on truth, but on the establishment of a common intellectual identity with his judge, the only figure he really needed to persuade.

One of the most notable features of the *Apology* is the enormous parade of literary learning that its author puts on display from beginning to end. From Homer and the Greek lyric poets through the tragedians and the classical philosophers, from Statius Caecilius and Ennius through the Roman

poets of the late Republic and the Augustan era, there is scarcely an author in the Greek and Roman literary canons to whom Apuleius cannot appeal in the construction of his defence. Apart from Virgil, those directly quoted include Homer, Catullus, Solon, Plato, Hadrian, Afranius, and Ennius, among others. With real confidence, it seems, Apuleius can speak about, or allude to, every major literary genre and its practitioners, history and oratory included. There is a conscious strategy at work in his speech of presenting himself as a man of rich knowledge.[18]

To some commentators, Apuleius's learning can seem superficial, intended simply to produce the immediate effect of brushing away the efforts of the prosecution. I find this a difficult proposition to evaluate. It is true that errors of quotation are made, but on the assumption that the speech is more or less the version that Apuleius delivered and that relatively little time was available for its preparation, they are not very significant. What the speech reveals to my mind is a man with a remarkable ability to speak knowledgeably, from memory, of a great number of authors whose works at one time or another he had read and read thoroughly. And even if the speech were revised for publication subsequently, which is likely but difficult to prove, this situation hardly alters in any meaningful way. The conditions for revision can scarcely have been comparable to those of the modern academic world. Apuleius emerges, therefore, as a figure whose literary and rhetorical capacities might seem to classify him as an adherent of what has been conceived as a new cultural phenomenon of the imperial age, the so-called Second Sophistic, a man of *paideia* who, on a standard definition, 'has read the approved canon of classical texts and absorbed from them the values of Hellenism and urban-dwelling man alike, and who applies those values in life.' I prefer, however, to refer to Apuleius's learning as *doctrina*, a term Apuleius uses himself, and to regard him as an intellectual with interests, not infrequently pedantic, similar to those of other western authors of his period, the polymath Aulus Gellius, for instance, or even Suetonius, the scholarly biographer.[19]

Among those who heard Apuleius's speech there can have been few, I suspect, who knew Greek and Latin literature as intimately as Apuleius himself. Throughout the speech he characterizes Sicinius Aemilianus as a rustic boor who lacks *doctrina*, whose ignorance is cause enough for his assault on Apuleius to be dismissed. Aemilianus is not alone: Sicinius Pudens is said to be unable to speak Latin; apart from a few words of Greek, Punic is the language he uses, and that is as much a sign of barbarism as it is for Aemilianus not to know Greek at all.[20]

This could all be regarded as mere invective, nothing more than a set of standard ploys to discredit Apuleius's enemies. The cultural bias of Roman criminal procedure made the value of evidence presented by witnesses

depend on their social standing and personal character, assuming that the credibility of witnesses was proportional to their place in the social hierarchy and governed by their overall reputation. The testimony of some was more valuable than that of others. It mattered for instance whether a witness was a decurion, a plebeian, a gladiator, or a slave, whether he was rich or poor, or an enemy of the accused or friend of the prosecutor. In a series of directives in the previous generation, Hadrian had imposed a special obligation on provincial governors to apply strict standards when hearing evidence in trials and to follow traditional norms in making their assessments. Claudius Maximus can be expected to have paid due attention to the responsibilities of his office. Apuleius's assaults accordingly can be understood as necessary responses to the demands of Roman legal procedure in a serious criminal trial. It was important to impugn the testimony of his opponents by undermining their personal credibility.[21]

It would be wrong, however, to dismiss his attacks as rhetoric alone, not least because there is the uncomfortable fact that beneath the veneer of Roman civilization represented by architecture and law, communities like Oea and Sabratha in the Roman era were linguistically, and so culturally, very diverse. In Tripolitania the local languages of Neo-Punic and Libyan were just as prominent as Greek and Latin, if not more so. From literary sources the trilinguality of Septimius Severus, a native of Lepcis, might be recalled – Severus was sufficiently educated in Latin letters, schooled in Greek oratory, but more at home in Punic, so it was held – and the report that his sister Octavilla could hardly speak Latin at all should also be kept in mind. Ulpian assumed the vitality of Punic in his day as a matter of course (*Dig*. 32.11 pr.; 45.1.1.6). It is inscriptions, however, that best illustrate the linguistic heterogeneity of the region, and in so doing strongly offset the Romanocentric view of Roman Tripolitania which the *Apology*, on first inspection, necessarily demands. Thus, inscriptions reveal Libyan names like that of Stiddin from Oea, or Neo-Punic names like that of Iddibal, son of Balsillac, grandson of Annobal, from Lepcis. There are Romanized forms like that, from a late-second-century bilingual inscription, of the misspelled Q. Apuleus Maxssimus (*qui et Rideus vocabatur*), son of Iuzale, grandson of Iurathe, whose wife was named Thanubra, but whose sons were called Pudens, Severus, and Maxsimus. And there are multi-cultural names, like that of the landowner Ulpius Chinitiu, a man wealthy enough to have left a mausoleum and works of sculpture, but someone who was obviously of native origin striving to renegotiate his cultural identity. Roman Tripolitania was evidently a society in cultural flux, and Greek and Latin were the languages, it should be understood, of an intrusive alien authority. (Observe that there are inscriptions in Punic and Libyan as well as Greek and Latin,

and inscriptions where Latin names and titles of magistrates are transcribed into the Punic script.) Romans might conflate the local gods with those they brought with them, so that for instance the Libyan god Canapphar was assimilated to Mars, but the local gods were by no means ousted, and in the early imperial period local burial practices remained very much unaffected by the arrival of Roman ways. To acquire an education Apuleius himself had been sent away from his native Madauros, which he describes as being on the virtual limits of civilization (*Flor*. 18.15–16; *Apol*. 24.1), as from Oea the older son of Pudentilla, Sicinius Pontianus. The two had met, fatefully, as students in Athens, the greatest of all intellectual centres and a city very different from their African *patriae* (*Apol*. 72.3). But they can hardly have been representative of the local population in the forum and basilica of Sabratha when the trial of Apuleius took place. There, although complementing the Roman form and architecture of the city, the Latin in which the trial was held was only one of the various culturally clashing languages to be heard. Much of the city's other business was routinely, and perhaps more typically, conducted in the local vernacular.[22]

Claudius Maximus, however, was not a man of this local world. At the time of his governorship the proconsul was about sixty years of age and was bringing to a culmination a lifetime of patient devotion to the government of Rome and the service of the Caesars. Decorated by the emperor himself in Trajan's doomed attempt to conquer the Parthians, he had governed armed provinces on the Danube both before and after his consulship, and in Italy he had supervised one of the peninsula's great trunk routes and at Rome administered the city's public works. He was typical of the administrative elite of his age, a man who knew how to parlay loyalty to the emperor into personal political success and social advancement. Closely tied to the court of Antoninus Pius, he moved in the company of such influential contemporaries as M. Cornelius Fronto, the confidant of Marcus Aurelius, and L. Lollianus Avitus, his immediate predecessor in Africa. In addition, Claudius Maximus was a man of intellectual capacity, with a special interest in Stoic philosophy. It was this that had brought him directly into contact with the imperial family. In the first book of the *Meditations*, Marcus speaks of him as one of the three men he was most grateful ever to have known, and he pays Maximus the special tribute of having learned from him a whole catalogue of moral virtues that reflects very favourably on Maximus's own character, especially his 'mastery of self and vacillation in nothing.' He was one of those, it has been said, in whom Marcus particularly valued 'the qualities of consistency and balanced character.'[23]

It is not surprising, therefore, that Claudius Maximus and Apuleius could speak a common language, the language of the educated elite, or that

throughout his defence Apuleius could take pains to make this language work in his favour. He addressed Maximus repeatedly, not simply to hold his attention in conventional rhetorical fashion, but to establish and reinforce an intellectual bond with him. Responding to the charge, for example, that he had composed indecorous erotic poems and was therefore morally corrupt, Apuleius justifies himself to Maximus directly: he defends the use of pseudonyms in his poems by appealing to the precedents of Catullus, Ticida, Propertius, Tibullus, and Virgil, contrasting the practice of Lucilius (*Apol*. 10.1–5); he denies the objection that his conduct was unworthy of a Platonic philosopher by quoting from Plato's erotic poetry (*Apol*. 10.7–10); he appeals to Catullus's example again to show that poetry cannot be taken as literal evidence of a poet's character (*Apol*. 11.1–2); and by linking himself to Plato, he argues that his poetry is not lascivious but concerned with the meaning of love in a much more profound, philosophical sense (*Apol*. 12). Such learned discourse, both here and throughout the speech, he expects Maximus to understand intimately, unlike his rival Aemilianus: Maximus is a man of *sapientia, prouidentia, doctrina, perfecta eruditio* (*Apol*. 60.3, 84.6, 48.12, 91.3; cf. 36.5). Apuleius cannot instruct him – *etenim admonendus es mihi, non docendus* (*Apol*. 48.13) – but only remind Maximus of what he already philosophically knows, in the works of Aristotle (on natural history in particular [*Apol*. 36.5]), Plato (the *Timaeus* and the *Phaedo* specifically [*Apol*. 49.1; cf. 51.1; 64.4]), and other authors. Maximus and Apuleius are partners in knowledge, two of the intellectually elect, fellow members of the family of Plato (*Apol*. 64.3). The language Apuleius and Claudius Maximus spoke was a code, a mystery, known only to those initiated into the world of *doctrina*, and as such it acted both as an intellectual marker and as a social marker, since learning on this scale could only be the preserve of the socially and economically advantaged. It was not the language of traders, shopkeepers, artisans, and peasants, the majority, perhaps not available even to all those who constituted the Roman political classes, for while few men could be senators, fewer still were noble, fewer still consulars, fewer still virtuous, and fewer still learned (*eruditi*), or so Apuleius could elsewhere maintain (*Flor*. 8). In the isolated world of Sabratha, at a precise moment in time, the accused and his judge were the sole inhabitants of a rarefied atmosphere of intellectualism that separated them radically from the alternate, and far larger, world of ignorance and magical practice. Or rather perhaps, as the language of reminding suggests, Claudius Maximus and Apuleius were not so much two philosophers together, precise peers, as men who represented a variation on the theme of statesman and philosopher-counsellor, analogous to Hadrian and Pancrates, the one in his public, prestige-conferring role benefiting from the sage advice of the other, a lesser man detached from the

ordinary affairs of the world who was able for that reason to serve the public servant as a constant source of enlightenment. Apuleius was surely aware of Quintilian's advice that it was important to know a judge's character, to flatter him to secure his goodwill, that a judge in a capital case expected consummate oratory that was both informative and charming, filled with suitably entertaining digressions, that the orator knew how to think on his feet and improvise appropriately, using his facial expressions and movements of his eyes to influence the figure sitting on the tribunal.[24]

The social distance that lay between judge and advocate on the one hand and the labouring majority of Tripolitania on the other can be glimpsed, quite literally, by recourse again to the rich evidence of mosaics, in which scenes of fishermen at work make accessible something of the lives of men like those Apuleius was said to have paid to procure fish for him for occult purposes. At first Apuleius denied association with the individuals concerned (*Apol*. 29), who were not, it seems, present at the trial. At a later point, however, the connection becomes undeniably evident (*Apol*. 33). A seascape from the Villa of the Nile mosaic from Lepcis Magna has the following features: 'Three muscular youths are exerting themselves to pull the fishing nets up onto the land; near them is a large basket. On the sea one fisherman is drawing a net, while another one who has hooked a great bass is holding out in his right hand a basket in which to land the fish. Behind this fisherman an old man is seated, intent on fixing the bait to his hook.' For its realistic details an item from Hippo Regius might be compared that shows fishermen drawing their nets, while in contrast an example from Sousse illustrates the differing techniques by which fish were caught, with lines, traps, net-casting, and net-drawing. Here all sorts of sea creatures swim on the surface of the sea in a fanciful assemblage, disproportionately to the fishermen and their boats. As seen already, the wealthy found such prosaic details from the world of work suitable items of decoration for their residences, though they can scarcely have experienced the type of labour involved directly. In everyday life, many men must have spent their days harvesting the bounty of the sea in the manner the mosaics represent. Their survival demanded it. Such ordinary work, however, was of no interest to those fortunate enough to be able to devote their time and energies to the study of literature and philosophy.[25]

IV

In an early section of the *Apology* (4), Apuleius defends himself against the charge that he was a *philosophus formonsus*, a philosopher of handsome appearance, an indictment that again sounds trivial at first blush and that again Apuleius rebuts with sarcasm: he cannot change the way nature made

him, and in any case were not Pythagoras and Zeno of Elea philosophers also known for their beauty? Furthermore, uninterrupted literary labour has robbed him of any claim to beauty, has sapped his strength and wasted his body, so that he has become pale and thin. Look at his hair, which his accusers said he had grown long to enhance his appearance: it was in fact unkempt, matted and knotted, of uneven length, 'like a lump of tow' (*stuppeo tomento adsimilis*). Apuleius did not even bother to comb or to part it.

Romans were highly sensitive to distinctions of dress and deportment, especially in an orator. Quintilian had observed (*Inst*. 11.137) that while there was no special dress the orator should wear, his dress nonetheless should be distinguished and manly, *splendidus et uirilis*, because he was so much in the public eye. Equally, however, excessive attention to the style of the toga or shoes, or to the arrangement of the hair, was reprehensible. The beard, moreover, whether carefully groomed or allowed to grow uncontrolledly, could convey various views of virility. A certain limit in physically presenting the self had to be met.[26]

Apuleius's self-portrait conjures up the image of the introspective philosopher known in art of the Hellenistic era and beyond, a visionary figure who at times might be portrayed as physically enfeebled. One might compare the image of Apollonius of Tyana as presented by Philostratus: accused, like Apuleius, of practising magic, in this case before Domitian, Apollonius found that his clothes and the manner in which he wore his grey hair could be introduced as proof of the charge. He looked like a magician, startling those who saw him by the oddity of his appearance even as they were impressed by his imposing features. Domitian had his hair and beard cut. In a speech of defence, the arguments could be offered that the long hair of the philosopher was not to be violated by the curling iron, and that Apollonius's predilection for linen followed a precedent set by Pythagoras. The distinction between magician and philosopher could be very narrow, and a man who travelled the world in search of wisdom, as Apollonius himself said, might easily believe that he could serve as political adviser to Roman senators threatened by tyranny. The younger Pliny's description of the philosopher Euphrates might also be invoked, a man marked out by his *proceritas* and *decora facies*: Euphrates had long hair too (though he kept it well groomed) and a long white beard, features that gave him a rather venerable aspect; his restrained dress was one of the reasons why one felt a certain awe when one met him (*Ep*. 1.10). When he said this Pliny was prefect of the Treasury of Saturn, overburdened with public duties. In spare moments he would complain to Euphrates, and Euphrates would offer consolation (*Ep*. 1.10.10): *Ille me consolatur, adfirmat etiam esse hanc philosophiae et quidem pulcherrimam partem, agere negotium publicum, cognoscere iudicare promere et exercere*

iustitiam, quaeque ipsi doceant in usu habere ('He consoles me by saying that anyone who holds public office, presides at trials and passes judgement, expounds and administers justice, and thereby puts into practice what the philosopher only teaches, has a part in the philosophic life and indeed the noblest part of all').[27]

The role of detached adviser was the perfect role for Apuleius to adopt in relation to Claudius Maximus, the *uirum seuerum et totius prouinciae negotiis occupatum* (*Apol*. 25.3), and the appealing hint he supplied by drawing Maximus's attention to his physical demeanour can scarcely have been missed by a person of Maximus's social status and intellectual outlook – a man of balanced judgment (*uirum aequum et iustitiae pertinacem* [*Apol*. 102.4]) who was perhaps predisposed to share Marcus Aurelius's scepticism towards the practice of magic (*Med*. 1.6). Apuleius spoke, and presented himself, in terms he could easily understand: they alone had a share in the power of rational knowledge, and not surprisingly therefore Apuleius's final appeal in his speech was addressed *tam bono tamque emendatoque uiro* (*Apol*. 103.5). For the execution of Roman justice the implications are obvious: discovering the truth, pursuing constitutional powers to an objective end – these were rather less important matters than the persuasive power of informed and mutually comprehensible words.

V

At the surface level, Apuleius's *Apology* seems to be little more than a playful, clever, and entertaining piece of Latin rhetoric. In fact, it is rather like a box of delights, inviting its reader to enter a succession of new and differing worlds as its surface is made to open up. Considered in its topographical setting, the work provides evidence of the spread of Roman law to a provincial region and of everything that Roman law connotes: order and civilization, the rational, an all-encompassing Romanization. But considered in its magical, that is to say, religious, context, the work exposes a much more complex and differentiated Roman culture in which the irrational is a notably strong and all-pervasive element in the total cultural mix – not just the irrationality of religious belief in general, which Roman society could easily legitimate, but the irrationality of a belief system that was officially disapproved and actively repressed. Magic, it is clear, constrained the lives of innumerable subjects of the Roman world in a way that makes the alien aspect of that world unmistakable. From an intellectual perspective, the work offers evidence of the enormous gulf that existed between the educated few, the men of Latin *doctrina* or Greek *paideia*, and the rest, many of whom, even though wealthy and influential, never lost the marks of their local origins

despite the impact of the new cultural forms. And when Roman justice was exercised on the margins of empire, it was predictable that the few should display solidarity against the many, for the code of knowledge that bound them inextricably together offset that principle of equity which, in theory, had always distinguished Roman law.

The trial of Apuleius was a historical drama whose roots lay in his accidental arrival in Oea some years earlier. The educated outsider dazzled the inhabitants of the tiny town with his florid speech-making, but he also spread fear and anxiety among them when, so it seemed, moving easily between the worlds of high culture and destructive evil, he sent young boys into trances and women into fits with his magical incantations. Through his marriage to Pudentilla, he even challenged the ascendancy of locally prominent families. It was not merely because of money, therefore, that Apuleius was attacked: he was a hostile intruder, an invader who had to be expelled because he disrupted the patterns of local life in a relatively closed community where the ways of Rome were still contending for cultural supremacy. The instrument his enemies chose in order to seek their vengeance against him was the civilizing law of Rome. The defence with which Apuleius countered, ironically, was the magical power of words.[28]

Postscript

The object was to define some of the circumstances under which the *Apology* came into being, on the assumption that the speech as it now exists is the outcome of a trial that once actually took place. That assumption still holds, despite the re-emergence of the notion, attributable to the putatively universal influence in the second century of the Second Sophistic (to the exclusion of all else), that the *Apology* is a rhetorical showpiece composed chiefly for purposes of self-aggrandizement, intellectual display, and amusement. It resembles the idea that Ovid never went to Tomis but wrote his exile poetry in Rome. The notion cannot be disproved, but it seems to me inherently implausible.[29]

A few more historical comparanda may be added. From archaeological research, it is clear that the forum of Sabratha was close to an area occupied by modest houses and workshops in which many trades and handicrafts were practised. Activities related to fishing were especially important: the dyeing of fabrics from the *murex* (a shellfish), the salting of fish, and, above all, the production of *garum* which, with olive oil and animals for the amphitheatre, was one of Sabratha's principal exports. Production was so extensive that the smell of fish can be expected to have almost always been in the air, even as Apuleius addressed the proconsul.[30]

How large the audience was that heard Apuleius's speech is unknown, but some of its members, perhaps many, were probably people from the fishing industry and comparable trades: artisans and shopkeepers. As stated, they are unlikely in most cases to have had much knowledge of, or an interest in, sophistry, which both locally and throughout the Roman world can have had meaning only for a minuscule proportion of the population. Nonetheless the allegations made against Apuleius concerning the magical use of fish, and the lengthy description of his interest in studying their different species, may well reflect the importance of fish in the economy and culture of Roman Tripolitania. The audience is sometimes assumed to be simply a 'mass audience,' or an audience of 'normal people,' without consideration of its composition. Social differentiation is important, however, and ethnic variation is also to be noted: there were Syrian and Aramaean elements for instance in Sabratha.[31]

The members of Claudius Maximus's *consilium* cannot be identified, unless Q. Lollius Urbicus, an important figure of considerable military and administrative experience Apuleius mentions early in the speech, is to be considered (*Apol.* 2.8–3.1). A proconsul of Sardinia a century earlier had had eight members on his advisory board when judging a boundary dispute, including his legate and his quaestor. Claudius Maximus should be expected to have had a similar number of advisers. They were the people to impress. It is not axiomatic, however, that all will have been as sensitive to Apuleius's parade of learning as Claudius Maximus appears to have been. Literary reminiscence cannot always have been the chief preoccupation of the men who administered Rome's empire.[32]

Legal cases were probably the largest item of a provincial governor's business. From the inception to the conclusion of a hearing his will was paramount. Nothing illustrates this better than the *Acts of the Christian Martyrs*, a source of information not well disposed to the Roman establishment, but where the exercise of individual discretion is beyond question. This makes the issue of the precise law under which the allegations against Apuleius were made to some extent redundant. Investigation and judgment were the prerogative of Claudius Maximus. It may well be that over the course of time Roman perceptions of magic changed: the evidence available hardly permits comparison from one epoch to another. In the middle of the second century, however, when the threat posed by deviant practices to social stability was well understood, as Pliny's enquiry to Trajan about Christians in Bithynia proves best of all (*Ep.* 10.96), the seriousness of the charges against Apuleius was self-evident.[33]

To particularize the setting in which Apuleius's trial took place is to give the *Apology* a distinctiveness, and an immediacy, it cannot otherwise have.

Under the circumstances concerned, it is hardly credible that the accused should imagine that his best hope of acquittal, in a capital case, lay in entertaining the judge who held his fate in his hands with a game-like display of literary allusions. A trial before a provincial governor was a matter of consequence. Quintilian had warned that cases came on suddenly, as indeed happened with Apuleius, and likewise knew that the properly trained advocate would have the skills necessary to improvise and deal with the unexpected (*Inst*. 10.7.2). For complete success, recourse to the aid of magical signs inscribed on a gold charm might be sought.[34]

2

Contending with Conversion: Reflections on the Re-formation of Lucius the Ass

On the beach at Cenchreae the fugitive Ass awakes from his night-time sleep aware of the all-encompassing presence around him of the supreme goddess. Sensing the chance to end once and for all the misfortunes that have plagued him since his catastrophic, metamorphosing experiment with magic, he purifies himself by bathing in the sea, then prays to the almighty power to restore him to human form. Asleep once more, he has a vision of the goddess emerging from the water. She identifies herself as Isis, and says that she has come in answer to his prayer. The goddess tells the Ass that he will find the roses he needs to escape his asinine form the following day, her special day, in the hands of a priest who will be taking part in a ceremony to mark the end of winter when a boat will be ritually dedicated to the sea. Next morning, as the townspeople prepare for the holy day, the Ass finds the procession of Isis's worshippers and eventually eats the garland of roses the priest offers him. At once he returns to his human shape, and the crowd of onlookers recognizes the miracle Isis has performed in their midst. The ceremony of the ship duly takes place, the re-formed Lucius now among the worshippers, so filled with enthusiasm for the goddess that he afterwards takes up residence in her temple. There he has more visions, and learns that he must be initiated into the goddess's mysteries. Her high priest advises him how to prepare for the great event, and once Isis has signalled the appropriate day the priest initiates Lucius before a group of fellow devotees. Soon afterwards, Lucius returns to his home in Corinth, until once more at Isis's command he travels to Rome and there devotes himself to a life of worship in her temple in the Campus Martius. A year passes. More divine messages then bring the news that Lucius must also be initiated into the mysteries of Isis's consort Osiris, and indeed be initiated for a third time. The rituals are carried out, and finally Lucius becomes an acolyte in the cult

of the god. It is at this point that the story of Lucius's marvellous adventures, recounted in Book 11 of Apuleius's *Metamorphoses*, comes to a close.

I

The final book of the *Metamorphoses* is a fascinating text. With no known counterpart elsewhere, as far as can be told it is one of the most original elements in Apuleius's version of the story he inherited and adapted of a man magically transformed into an ass, and consequently seems, as has often been observed, to carry a special significance. It is here after all that Lucius suddenly, and unexpectedly, describes himself as 'a man from Madauros' (*Met*. 11.27: *Madaurensem*), appearing to identify himself with his author and almost compelling his reader to conclude that Book 11 is in some sense autobiographical: if at the surface level Isis is the agent responsible for changing the Ass into human form, beneath the surface the story of her revelation to Lucius and Lucius's initiation into her mysteries is a genuine record of Apuleius's own conversion and devotion to the goddess. Or so it might be thought. For some readers, however, such a leap of faith is too great, or too simplistic: the final book of the *Metamorphoses* is undoubtedly a book of religious import, but Apuleius no more authorizes a single meaning for the reader in Book 11 than in any other part of the work, and despite its focus on initiation, the details of ritual with which the story is filled reflect no arcane knowledge on the author's part, but only information of a kind easily accessible to all. The book is not only fascinating, therefore, but highly problematical.[1]

Whatever their interpretative stance, critics and commentators commonly refer to the events described in Book 11, especially to Lucius's experience on the beach and the vision of Isis that follows his prayer, as a religious conversion, as I have just done myself. A.D. Nock's famous characterization of Book 11 as 'the high-water mark of the piety which grew out of the mystery religions' occurs in a chapter of his celebrated book *Conversion* (1933) that is called 'The Conversion of Lucius'; and John J. Winkler in his *Auctor and Actor* (1985), a turning point in modern Apuleian criticism, wrote that the novel 'presents a value-free description of what a conversion with cosmic, life-reorienting consequences would be like.' In the same tradition, the highly stimulating study of Nancy Shumate, *Crisis and Conversion in Apuleius's* Metamorphoses (1996), goes even further: not only is Lucius converted to the cult of Isis, but Apuleius's entire novel is to be understood as what can be called 'a conversion narrative,' and it is a narrative indeed that serves as a prototype for the *Confessions* of Augustine in late antiquity and other accounts of conversion in later European literature. The argument is

based in large part on the theories of William James, who in *The Varieties of Religious Experience* of 1902 maintained that conversion is a psychological process in which a phase of cognitive crisis and breakdown is resolved by an experience of a divine, saving power that brings new knowledge and new meaning to life: people who experience conversion first lose all sense of identity, as the values they have previously taken as normative in the world around them are shown to be false, before a new, more secure stage of life is entered once the subjects dedicate themselves to the divine power that has manifested itself to them in an intensely metaphysical moment. Lucius's crisis, on this view, occupies the first ten books of the *Metamorphoses* before resolution – the saving intervention of Isis – occurs in Book 11. The conversion of Lucius therefore is a long process that, in Shumate's words, involves 'nothing less than the collapse of an entire system of premises and assumptions about how the world works and its replacement by one radically different, or at least so it seems to the convert.'[2]

No one, I think, will reasonably dispute the contention that the final book of the *Metamorphoses* is a record of religious sentiment, no matter how loosely or definitively cast, or that the *Metamorphoses* at large is a work in which religious themes are important. The issue I want to consider in this essay, however, is how relevant or useful the term 'conversion' can be in evaluating religious experience in the polytheistic society to which Lucius and his creator Apuleius belonged, in contrast, that is, to the monotheistic culture in which James discussed conversion, in view of the fact that religious conditions in the two systems are inherently different. James's views clearly influenced Nock as well as Shumate, and the issue stated underlies his book from beginning to end. But it is one that is not directly expressed there, at least in the manner in which I have just expressed it, or as far as I know elsewhere in modern scholarship. Much will depend, quite clearly, on how 'conversion' is understood. The definition given by James may be taken as a starting point:

> To be converted, to be regenerated, to receive grace, to experience religion, to gain an assurance, are so many phrases which denote the process, gradual or sudden, by which a self divided, and consciously wrong inferior and unhappy, becomes unified and consciously right superior and happy, in consequence of its firmer hold upon religious realities. This at least is what conversion signifies in general terms, whether or not we believe that a direct divine operation is needed to bring such a moral change about.

To be accurate, this is not so much a definition as a gloss, and one heavily influenced by Christianizing assumptions, as the references to 'grace' and 'moral change' indicate, and the reality is that James paid hardly any

attention in discussing conversion to religions other than Christianity or religious systems that were not monotheistic. The definition is ambiguous, evoking many possible meanings, but in essence it conveys the idea that conversion is a complete change from one state of mind to another, prompted by a new religious awareness on the convert's part. James adds this statement: 'To say that man is "converted" means … that religious ideas, previously peripheral in his consciousness, now take a central place, and that religious aims form the habitual centre of his energy.'[3]

Religious conversion, however, may signify not only James's intense concentration on 'religious aims,' but also a complete change of religious identity as, for instance, when an individual Christian converts from Protestantism to Catholicism or, more fundamentally, when an individual converts from one major religion to another, for example, from Judaism to Christianity or from Christianity to Islam. At this level of understanding, the idea of change from one state to another is far more absolute than it is with James's definition, and in both cases it is the notion of turning away from one world view towards another utterly different that predominates. This sense of absolute change is well expressed by Nock:

> By conversion we mean the reorientation of the soul of an individual, his deliberate turning from indifference or from an earlier form of piety to another, a turning which implies a consciousness that a great change is involved, that the old was wrong and the new is right. It is seen at its fullest in the positive response of a man to the choice set before him by the prophetic religions.

A contemporary definition is plainer still: a religious conversion is 'any distinct change of allegiance, which would include return from apostasy … as well as entry into a new faith and community.'[4]

The notion that conversion must represent absolute change is highly suited, as Nock indicated with his reference to 'the prophetic religions,' to a socio-cultural context characterized by competitive forms of monotheism. It is after all impossible to be both a Jew and a Christian or even both a Protestant and a Catholic: a choice has to be made in these examples between rival and mutually incompatible religious forms. But neither the world of Apuleius's novel nor the real world in which Apuleius himself lived were worlds generally characterized by rival religious systems. On the contrary, both worlds knew a multiplicity of coexistent gods in a pantheon that always had the potential to expand and in which the incorporation of new gods never required the expulsion of the old or demanded from worshippers a choice between one form of divinity and another. How then might the notion of 'conversion' fit such a scheme of divine conceptualization? In

what sense was it possible for a change of religious identity or allegiance on Lucius's part to occur? The questions are problematical, and made all the more so by words from W.H. Auden that were written in the light of his own experience of a gradualist religious conversion lasting eighteen years: 'There are two types of conversion, the conversion from one faith – it may be atheism – to another, and the transformation of an unthinking traditional faith into a personal conviction. Each kind presupposes, I think, monotheistic religion.'[5]

It was not impossible in the Mediterranean world of the second century for conversion in the absolute sense to take place. The progress of Christianity, a religion which in its monotheistic exclusivity by definition ran counter to traditional Greco-Roman polytheism, was constantly offering men and women a new religious option, and although Greco-Roman elements were subsumed within the various Christian sects that everywhere sprang up in the imperial age, there can be no doubt that in the period up to Constantine there were any number of absolute religious conversions as people made their choice between conventional polytheism, on the one hand, and Christian monotheism, on the other. A new religious identity was adopted by many, on the understanding that the traditional system and Christianity were mutually incompatible, just as Christianity and Islam are understood to be incompatible today. What was involved in these early Christian conversions from a psychological point of view is irrecoverable for the most part, but the historian Ramsay MacMullen has made the argument that for many, perhaps most, there was no profound experience of the kind associated with Paul of Tarsus on the road to Emmaus or Augustine as described in the *Confessions*, only a simple response to the superiority of Christian wonder-working over traditional forms of magic. The power of the Christian god was made plain through the miracles his followers performed, and that was enough on this view to secure a change of religious allegiance on the part of those who saw the wonders and came to believe, or said that they did. This is a controversial explanation, but one that in its recognition of miracle working as a fixed element in the religious mentality of classical antiquity is evidently set within a plausible historical context. For present purposes, however, all that is relevant is the sense of absolute change from one belief system to another: whatever the remnants of traditionalism, in theory a Christian in the Roman imperial age could not simultaneously be a worshipper of Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva, or of any other divinity known to humankind. Admittedly the story arose that the emperor Severus Alexander had a domestic chapel in which he kept and worshipped effigies of the *sanctiores animae* Apollonius of Tyana, Jesus, Abraham, and Orpheus. The story is in fact unlikely to be true, but even if it were, it assumes recognition only of

the Christian figure as a holy man, like Abraham, not a religious conversion. Anything of course is possible. But Christian intolerance of other religions made divine compatibility impossible.[6]

II

Apuleius's story of the magical transformation of Lucius, his adventures as the Ass, and his eventual restoration by Isis to human form is a fiction that can make no claim to literal credibility. Yet a definitive study of the social and economic structures the *Metamorphoses* takes as normative has shown that the story is set in the very real world of the Roman empire of the second century. This is a fact that must be taken into account in all types of criticism. Apuleius did not invent the story of Lucius, but the setting he constructed for it will have been immediately recognizable to his contemporaries as their world, and rather different, by way of contrast, from the more timeless or chronologically remote settings of Greek romance.[7]

Consequently if the *Metamorphoses* portrays forms of social and economic behaviour easily perceptible as historically authentic and culturally specific, the same is likely to be true for its representations of religious behaviour – and indeed religious behaviour may be construed by definition as a form of social comportment. Most Greco-Roman and other contemporary Mediterranean religious systems were polytheistic and syncretistic, and throughout the *Metamorphoses* religious life and activity are presented in these terms: a multiplicity of gods, all generally tolerant of one another, identified by their Roman names for a Latinate readership despite the story's setting in Greece, to whom prayers and sacrifices are offered in entirely conventional ways, and who reveal their wishes as Greco-Roman gods have always done. Predictably, therefore, there is no sign of gods locked in jealous rivalry with one another for a clientele of adherents, in the sense of gods making demands for the exclusive allegiance of their followers, nor is there any sign of individuals undergoing 'conversion' to them in the way that some of Apuleius's contemporaries really were converting to Christianity in the second century. The sole exception, and it is a significant exception, is provided by the wife of a miller who appears in Book 9 (*Met*. 9.14), a woman who is committed to a single god and who may have been perceived by Apuleius's readers as a Christian. Christian numbers in the second century were minuscule, and their beliefs were wildly misconstrued by the non-Christian majority. But their presence was sufficiently strong for Apuleius not to have been aware of them, and this has led to the belief that he purposefully portrayed the miller's wife as a Christian, and even included in his description of her an allusion to the Christian eucharist. It is impossible of

course to prove this. But the significant point is that the woman is presented in utterly derisive terms – by Lucius if not Apuleius – because of her steadfast devotion to a monotheistic cult, which is unmistakably taken to be a deviant form of religious behaviour:

saeua scaeua uiriosa ebriosa peruicax pertinax, in rapinis turpibus auara, in sumptibus foedis profusa, inimica fidei, hostis pudicitiae. Tunc spretis atque calcatis diuinis numinibus in uicem certae religionis mentita sacrilega praesumptione dei, quem praedicaret unicum, confictis obseruationibus uacuis fallens omnis homines et miserum maritum decipiens matutino mero et continuo stupro corpus manciparat.

She was hard-hearted, perverse, man-mad, drunken, and stubborn to the last degree. Tight-fisted in the squalid pursuit of gain, lavish in spending on debauchery, she had no use for loyalty and was a sworn enemy to chastity. Worse still, she had rejected and spurned the heavenly gods, and in place of true religion she had falsely and blasphemously set up a deity of her own whom she proclaimed to be the One and Only God; and having bamboozled the world in general and her husband in particular by meaningless rituals of her own invention, she was able to give herself over to a day-long course of drinking and prostitution.[8]

III

It is implicit in the case histories of conversion James recorded that his converts were fully familiar before conversion with the dominant religious framework of the society in which they lived, Christian and monotheistic as it was, and it is explicit that upon conversion this already familiar framework came to occupy a principal place in the converts' lives. All the converts James considered were Christian converts in Christian societies (and almost all Protestants), so that when the subjects entered upon their moments of divine revelation they were easily able to identify the divinity revealing itself to them as the Christian God and could easily address him as such. Recognition may not have been instantaneous, but sooner or later the divine power that manifested itself was always identifiable as the Christian god because no other explanation was possible in the monotheistic culture that naturally conditioned and compelled the convert to think along fixed and unambiguous lines. One subject James studied, Stephen H. Bradley, had two experiences of divine revelation, first when he was fourteen and again nine years later, and on each occasion he immediately perceived the presence first of the Christian 'Saviour' and later of the 'Holy Spirit': 'I thought I saw the Saviour, by faith, in human shape, for about one second in the room, with arms extended, appearing to say to me, Come' … 'I will now relate my

experience of the power of the Holy Spirit which took place on the same night.' His autobiographical record is not contemporaneous with the experience of revelation and conversion itself, and it may therefore reflect a later rationalization of events. Nonetheless, it was impossible for Bradley, or any of James's other subjects, to define his experience in any way other than according to conventional categories. Thus if the god were unrecognizable at the time of manifestation, as in the case of S.H. Hadley, an alcoholic who was on the verge of killing himself when he experienced divine revelation, there was only one possible explanation: 'As I sat there thinking, I seemed to feel some great and mighty presence. I did not know then what it was. I did learn afterwards that it was Jesus, the sinner's friend.' David Brainerd, another convert, stated, 'I had no particular apprehension of any one person in the Trinity, either the Father, the Son, or the Holy Ghost; but it appeared to be Divine glory.' Christian terms of reference were used to make sense of experience because no other terms were available.[9]

From this perspective, I want now particularly to concentrate on the early stages of the encounter between Lucius and Isis in Book 11 of the *Metamorphoses* in order to draw out what I think are the crucial aspects of their relationship. The claim has been made that in Book 11 Isis becomes for Lucius 'the recipient of his complete and exclusive devotion,' as if Lucius had made a choice between one religious form and another in the manner, presumably, of the miller's wife, or of a modern convert from Christianity to Islam. It is precisely on this point, however, that the issue of Lucius's 'conversion' hinges, because the experience can be called a conversion only if it can be shown beyond reasonable doubt that Isis does in fact make exclusive claims on Lucius's religious allegiance. Is this then the case? For an answer attention has to be turned, without minimizing the importance of the pilgrim's critical progress in the first ten books of the *Metamorphoses*, to Lucius's encounter with Isis, because it is only there that the nature of the goddess's demands upon Lucius can be seen.[10]

In the first stage (*Met*. 11.1), the Ass awakes from his sleep to find himself conscious of the animating presence of an omnipotent goddess, but he is completely unaware of her identity. In a polytheistic context any number of female deities could be understood to fill the role of mother-goddess, which is in essence how Apuleius describes the divinity at this stage, but Lucius attaches no name to her. The immediate visual sign of her presence is a resplendent full moon rising from the sea – *praemicantis lunae candore nimio completum orbem commodum marinis emergentem fluctibus* – which could lead the Latinate reader to think immediately of Diana or possibly Venus, but to Lucius the goddess remains no more than an august image (*augustum specimen*), not necessarily even anthropomorphic in form. Like James's

converts, the Ass is culturally conditioned to respond to the revelation in a conventional religious idiom, but the idiom is the complete opposite of that known to James's subjects: not one but an infinite range of names is available to supply an identity to the presence the Ass feels around him, so infinite that he cannot possibly know them all, especially if there is no unmistakable distinguishing sign. The presence duly remains anonymous.[11]

A prayer made to the goddess by Lucius makes up the second element of the experience (*Met*. 11.2). It depends on the goddess's anonymity the story has already established, and in fully conventional style it adopts a polytheistic form of address that reflects the syncretistic quality of Greco-Roman religion previously mentioned. The Ass does not immediately think of, or speak to, a specific power: he can use only a general form of address, *Regina caeli* ('Queen of heaven'), which could be applicable to any moon goddess, and then call upon her according to all the polytheistic and commonly assimilable naming possibilities known and unknown to him: Eleusinian Ceres, Venus of Paphos, Diana of Ephesus, Proserpina, or, in a general blanket statement, whoever else she may be: *quoquo nomine, quoquo ritu, quaqua facie te fas est inuocare* ('by whatever name, in whatever manner, in whatever guise it is permitted to call on you'). The name of Isis, however, is not one of the names that occurs to Lucius, and her identity, it must be emphasized, still remains unrevealed. It is also notable that the object of Lucius's prayer is again very traditional, and very Roman, in its objective practicality: a restoration to human form, or, if that is impossible, death. The request has nothing of the metaphysical, the moralistic, or the cognitive about it.[12]

The third stage is the revelation of an anthropomorphic goddess the Ass is able to describe in meticulous detail (*Met*. 11.3–4), in strong contrast to the vague vision of the moon goddess he has seen so far. Nonetheless her identity is still kept secret until she herself discloses it when she explains that she has come in answer to Lucius's prayer (*Met*. 11.5). She rises from the sea, which again inclines the Roman reader to think of Venus, but the divinity is new and as far as can be told she is unknown to Lucius: unlike the other goddesses he has named, Isis has not featured directly in the *Metamorphoses* before. She describes herself first in general terms, as the creator of the universe and the supreme embodiment of divinity, though in a way that at once acknowledges the existence of many other gods and goddesses: *summa numinum, regina manium, prima caelitum, deorum dearumque facies uniformis* ('highest of the gods, queen of the shades, first of those who dwell in heaven, representing in one shape all gods and goddesses'). She is not, therefore, a divinity jealous of other gods or in competition with them, but very much a divinity who is one of the many she recognizes. She continues that she is known to different peoples in different

places by different names, but that her true name is one the Egyptians have given to her, the name of Isis:

Inde primigenii Phryges Pessinuntiam deum matrem, hinc autocthones Attici Cecropeiam Mineruam, illinc fluctuantes Cyprii Paphiam Venerem, Cretes sagittiferi Dictynnam Dianam, Siculi trilingues Stygiam Proserpinam, Eleusinii uetusti Actaeam Cererem, Iunonem alii, Bellonam alii, Hecatam isti, Rhamnusiam illi, et qui nascentis dei Solis inchoantibus <et occidentis inclinantibus> inlustrantur radiis Aethiopes utrique priscaque doctrina pollentes Aegyptii caerimoniis me propriis percolentes appellant uero nomine reginam Isidem.

The Phrygians, first-born of mankind, call me the Pessinuntian Mother of the gods; the native Athenians the Cecropian Minerva; the island-dwelling Cypriots Paphian Venus; the archer Cretans Dictynnan Diana; the triple-tongued Sicilians Stygian Proserpine; the ancient Eleusinians Actaean Ceres; some call me Juno, some Bellona, others Hecate, others Rhamnusia; but both races of Ethiopians, those on whom the rising and those on whom the setting sun shines, and the Egyptians who excel in ancient learning, honour me with the worship which is truly mine and call me by my true name: Queen Isis.

The goddess appreciates, therefore, that her various forms are all transferable, and helpful in communicating to the Ass who she is, for she responds directly to his invocation and fills in the blanks, as it were, left by his blanket clause of address; and despite her claim to divine supremacy, she has no objection to being known by the various regional names, nor any wish to promote a single name or to obliterate, or even dispute, the identities of the other mother goddesses. It is a situation very different from that in which a monotheistic god is unable to tolerate any kind of divine cross-identification at all: the god of the Christians cannot simultaneously be Jupiter to the Romans or Zeus to the Greeks, or, to take a passage from the *De mundo* (37) in which, Apuleius says, the supreme god is known by a variety of names to Greeks and Romans (to which a limitless string of adjectives can be added to express conceptions of the divinity's multiform power), Zen and Kronos, Jupiter and Saturn.[13]

Having revealed herself to Lucius, Isis gives him instructions for his restoration into human form the next day and then, the fourth stage of Lucius's experience of conversion (*Met*. 11.6), adopts a far more reflective tone that in the final portion of her exhortation to him borders on the transcendent. In return for the practical benefit she is to bring him, his return to human shape (a *beneficium*), Isis requests of Lucius his devotion to her for the remainder of his days. He will live a favoured life under her guardianship (*tutela*), and

in death he will see her in the Underworld, where he will continue to worship her. Moreover, by obedient service now his life can be prolonged beyond the limits set by fate. The offer is very much a *do ut des* construct, in which the notion of reciprocity between two contracting parties making a bargain is obvious but important, a typically 'Roman' conceit as the language of benefits and guardianship shows. Lucius is prepared to give his assent to the contract, and in due course he recovers his human shape and is initiated. There is no indication or even implication in the text, however, that Isis ever demands of him an exclusive religious commitment, a turning away from divinities previously known, a rejection of the old religious life, a devotion to her alone. She is the only one able to prolong his life beyond its fated course, but that is different from taking her to insist on a life of exclusive religious allegiance from Lucius of the monotheistic sort. Indeed, it remains implicit that Isis will continue to be known by her many other names and forms to many others: those like Lucius until just now who have never encountered her. Further, there are limits to what Lucius's devotion entails: obedience, observation of ritual, and celibacy are the required counterparts of the goddess's protection, items which may lead to moral purity (though the text does not point directly to this), but whose immediate reward is not eternal happiness in the next world so much as an extension of life in the here and now. Isis does not fix the focus of her cult on an everlasting reward, only on a dividend in the mortal life that still remains.[14]

Consider in this context how many details appear in Book 11 on gods other than Isis. When Lucius first sees the goddess and thinks her so beautiful, he makes his point by saying that she is worthy of worship by the gods, in the plural (*Met*. 11.3). In the procession of worshippers at Cenchreae, he observes the pipe-players dedicated to Isis's consort Serapis, who is a divine power in his own right (11.9). The priests in the procession carry symbols of the most powerful gods, in the plural, not only of Isis but of other Egyptian gods: Osiris, Horus (or Harpocrates), Anubis (who in Lucius's description is significantly assimilated to Mercury), Ma'at, Hathor, and Thermuthis (11.10; cf. 16). Ma'at and Thermuthis may have been alternative representations of Isis, but again they were also distinct Egyptian divinities. Next in the procession come the gods themselves, first Anubis with his jackal's head, then Isis in the form of a cow. Anubis's function as the messenger of the gods, in the plural, is clearly stated (11.11), and it is these gods, those above and those below, that Lucius sees face to face and worships during his first initiation. (At that point, he says, he has stood on the verge of death before the Underworld – the threshold of Proserpina, as he calls it, not of Isis [11.23].) During the ceremony the priest offers a prayer seeking the favour of the gods, in the plural (11.23), and it is all these gods who

adore Isis, as Lucius indicates in his prayer that follows: *Te superi colunt, obseruant inferi* (11.25: 'the gods above worship you, the gods below revere you'). Once in Rome, Lucius learns that he must also be initiated into the mysteries of Osiris, a god who is again theologically identifiable with Isis but still separate from her and, moreover, the father of all the gods, in the plural (11.27: *deumque summi parentis*). And as he prepares for this and his final initiation, Lucius expresses himself as acting according to the will of the gods, once again in the plural, and describes Osiris when he appears as the mightiest of them (11.27: *manifestam deum uoluntatem*; 11.29: *mirificis imperiis deum*; 11.30: *deus deum magnorum potior*). In all of this there is and can be nothing monotheistic, nothing of the exclusive. On the contrary, Isis remains one among an infinite number of gods whose existence she never thinks to doubt, and whose demands on human worshippers she never contests. Supremacy is claimed in what is perceived as a natural hierarchy of gods, but the hierarchy itself is not questioned and the superior position within it of her companion Osiris is unchallenged.[15]

In view, therefore, of the non-exclusive, non-competitive, polytheistic setting of the events of Book 11, Lucius's experience cannot in my view properly be classified as a 'conversion' comparable to the cases of Christian conversion studied by James. I do not wish to deny at all that Book 11 evokes a type of religious experience analogous in some psychological or metaphysical respects to the events described in later conversion narratives, and it can be said, following James, that religion certainly comes to have a greater priority in Lucius's life than it did previously. Lucius's experience, however, like that of James's subjects, has to be seen not in universalist but in culturally specific terms. There is no rejection of one and embracing of a radically different system of religious knowledge, no heightened awareness of a single, dominant god already familiar to the worshipper, nothing to suggest that Lucius's previous religious knowledge was 'wrong' (to use Nock's term) or that he turns away from his past religious life, or that he undergoes a radical and total change of religious allegiance. Through a mystical experience, Lucius encounters a new divinity, but a divinity who is an expression of a divine principle he already naturally knows in many other guises. He relishes the new expression because of his physical restoration – a miracle takes place and 'belief' in the god responsible follows – but never to the detriment or rejection of the other forms of the mother-goddess earlier known.[16]

The new knowledge consequently is an extension of what Lucius already understands, a further dimension of pre-existing knowledge, an accretion to a base of religious certainty that stands unchanged – in crude terms simply more, if much more, of the same. Lucius's new religious awareness involves, as it must have done in the past, a henotheistic frame of reference in which

the Egyptian gods have assumed a prime place.[17] But to recognize this is only to confirm the absence of anything monotheistic in what has taken place. The point is made once more, and finally, by asking how Lucius could ever have become an apostate. He could not. There is, therefore, a fundamental difference of character between Lucius's experience and the conversions known to James, which the continuing presence of Osiris serves to emphasize: for the new cult is dualistic in nature, a cult of the great father and the great mother, and it is with his entry to the priesthood of the greater Osiris, not that of Isis, that Lucius's story ends.[18]

IV

If the experience of revelation and initiation is reported by the fictive Lucius, it is Apuleius himself who composed the details of religious protocol that make the final book of the *Metamorphoses* so dramatically successful. Whether the material he was dealing with was common knowledge, how did those details become part of Apuleius's consciousness? When was he exposed to the cult of Isis? How, in other words, did Apuleius know what he knew? Given the problems involved in determining the first moments of religious consciousness in anyone's life, ancient or modern, these are questions that are probably unanswerable in the long run. The acquisition of knowledge, however, cannot simply be taken for granted: it requires a context, and in this case a connection with Apuleius's personal history. There was, it happens, a temple of Isis at Sabratha, the Tripolitanian city where Apuleius was tried for magic in 158/9, which he can be presumed to have known – it lay to the east of the town – while across the forum opposite the basilica in which his trial took place there was also a temple to Serapis. Did Apuleius see Isiac initiates here and later draw on his recollections of their practices when writing the *Metamorphoses*, or at other places in Tripolitania, where the cult was certainly popular? At Gigthis, a town on the coastal highway of Tripolitania through which Apuleius is likely to have passed when, as he tells in the *Apology*, he set out for Alexandria, only to find himself unexpectedly detained at Oea, the chance discovery of a marble head of Serapis, a lamp showing the launch of the Isis boat, and a relief with Nilotic scenes reveals how entrenched worship of the Egyptian gods was. Anything is possible, and it is easy to see how tempting it might be to ascribe the whole religious world of the *Metamorphoses* to the influence of the authentic religious face of Tripolitania, whose cities, as ports, were centres that naturally attracted worshippers of the Egyptian gods from overseas and established their cults there. Yet when he arrived in Oea, Apuleius was roughly thirty years old and had spent many of his years travelling across a large part of the

Mediterranean world. His knowledge of the cult of Isis was probably already well formed by that time.[19]

Apuleius was born c. 125 in the small and obscure Roman colony of Madauros in Numidia. Dedicatory inscriptions there have revealed the large number of divinities worshipped by its inhabitants, including gods who were worshipped in mystery cults. To judge from standard inventories of evidence, however, the cult of Isis was not prominent at Madauros in the early second century, if followed at all. The cult is attested elsewhere in Numidia – a temple to Isis was established precisely in 158 at Lambaesis on the initiative of the legate of Legio III – but altogether it is unlikely to have had a major impact on Apuleius's religious awareness in early childhood. New evidence of course might appear at any time to alter this impression. At Carthage, however, Isis did enjoy worship – the site of a temple has been identified from an inscription – and Apuleius may have learned something of it when he went to school there as a boy, although it was Serapis who of the Egyptian gods held the greater place in Carthaginian piety. Perhaps therefore the city most likely to have impressed upon him the wonders of Isis was Athens, the city where for several years he studied when a young man. Isis had been worshipped there since the second century BC at latest, and by the time of Apuleius's arrival she was conspicuous everywhere in the ornamental decorations that bore her likeness, in the Isiac names Athenians gave their children, and in the way prosperous women were immortalized on their tombstones in her dress. Travellers offered her votive plaques bought in the agora to give thanks for her protection at sea, and she was venerated as the saviour of the city.[20]

The Greek traveller Pausanias, who visited Athens a few years after Apuleius, has left a record of a sanctuary of Serapis in the city which must also have served as a site for the worship of Isis (1.18.4). Apuleius may have known it too. But Isis had a cult centre in Athens in her own right. It was located on the southern slope of the Acropolis, where shortly before Apuleius's arrival a new shrine was built through the generosity of a female benefactor whose name is now unfortunately lost. The shrine had its own officials, a temple guardian (*zakaros*) and a stolist who ritually dressed the statue of Isis every day. The shrine was rather small, but those who visited it would have been able to see inside two cult statues, one of Isis herself – a finely wrought piece of dark grey stone, highly polished where the goddess's features were exposed and with careful definition of her hair and drapery – the other a statue of Aphrodite, the goddess with whom Isis was often identified, not least as Book 11 of the *Metamorphoses* shows. The female benefactor refurbished the statue of Isis when the new shrine was built, and also dedicated the statue to Aphrodite. Like Pausanias or any

other visitor to Athens, Apuleius can be imagined to have spent much of his time exploring the Acropolis, and he speaks indeed in the *De mundo* (32) of having seen Phidias's statue of Athena there. In the agora below, moreover, he might have noticed the Altar of Pity – Pausanias again remarked on it (1.17.1) – the name by which the old Altar of the Twelve Gods was now commonly known: for when Lucius after his return to human form is first addressed by the priest, it is precisely an 'altar of pity' (*aram misericordiae*) that he is said to have finally reached (*Met*. 11.15). Passing by the shrine of Isis, Apuleius could have noticed as well a priest offering sacrifice, a woman like the anonymous donor carrying a lamp in a procession of worshippers, or else interpreting the dreams Isis sent to her followers. It was while he was in Greece, as he remarks in the *Apology* (55.8), that like Lucius (*Met*. 3.15) he himself became an initiate of several mystery cults.[21]

The juxtaposition in the sanctuary of the two statues of Isis and Aphrodite is as clear an illustration as one could hope to have of the cross-identification of divinities generally characteristic of religious life in Roman antiquity. The statues are symbols of how the adoption in a community of a new divinity did not normally drive out an old, pre-existing god, but of how the common attributes the gods shared fused their identities into one, even as they maintained their individuality. A victory of one over the other was not an issue, and the worshipper needed to make no choice between them: they were distinct but compatible versions of the same divine principle. Another telling item of evidence emerges in the figure of a certain Dionysios of Marathon, a man who in the 120s is attested as *iacchagogus*, the bearer of the statue of Iacchos and the leader of the annual procession of worshippers from Athens to Eleusis in Athens's greatest religious event, the celebration of the Eleusinian Mysteries. The attestation itself is not particularly remarkable, but what arrests attention is that Dionysios, a worshipper of Demeter and Persephone, was simultaneously a priest of Isis, which shows beyond any doubt that mystery cults in antiquity, the monotheistic mysteries apart, never demanded the sole allegiance of their adherents. Divinities of different geographical origin but similar attributes were easily regarded as the same when they made their way across the Mediterranean and found new centres of acceptance. In Apuleius's day Isis herself was worshipped even at Eleusis.[22]

The knowledge of Isis that Apuleius is likely to have gained in Athens, if not elsewhere during the travels that occupied his early life, is not enough to prove that he himself was a devotee of Isis or, most crucially, that he ever experienced a revelation of the goddess of the sort he invented for Lucius. Nor can the reference to the temple of Isis in the Campus Martius at Rome (*Met*. 11.26), which almost demands to have some personal relevance to the religious life of the man from Madauros, be pressed to that end. Nonetheless, to

set the description of Lucius's revelation in its cultural context is enough to demonstrate that the notion of an exclusive devotion to a single divinity, the obvious exceptions apart, was a notion that had no real place in Apuleius's religious world. In the language of the *Metamorphoses*, Lucius was not transformed but physically 're-formed' (*Met*. 3.24, 25; 11.13, 16), physically 're-born' (*Met*. 11.16, 21), from man to ass and from ass to man. His shape, that is, was suddenly changed (*Met*. 11.6) and his religious sensibility was certainly raised. But in the modern sense of the word he did not experience religious 'conversion.' That term, I propose, cannot be properly used either to describe Lucius's encounter with Isis or to explain religious experience in the polytheistic culture of classical antiquity at all.[23]

Postscript

The object was to ask how relevant to Book 11 of the *Metamorphoses* the concept of conversion might be. As a coda, attention might linger on the garland of roses, the instrument of Lucius's re-formation. Apuleius's use of the rose as the antidote to Lucius's misfortune was not original but an element of the story he adapted. This is clear from the appearance and function of the rose as an antidote in the *Onos* attributed to Lucian, where consumption of the flower also eventually restores the hero to human form. Lucius's pursuit of the rose, however, is an important feature of the *Metamorphoses* and drives the plot once Lucius has been transformed. Photis informs Lucius immediately what he must do to recover his human shape (*Met*. 3.25), and the search underlies Lucius's adventures until he finds the Isiac priest and eats the garland the priest is carrying for him in the procession at Cenchreae (*Met*. 11.6; 11.13). The rose is the key agent of magical metamorphosis (cf. *Met*. 3.29).[24]

As the flower of Venus (cf. *Met*. 4.1), the rose was traditionally the flower of love and pleasure, a notion that Apuleius exploits as a matter of course in recounting Lucius's love affair with Photis. Though a slave, Photis is portrayed very much as a Venus-like figure (*Met*. 2.17), and in her lovemaking with Lucius she duly wears a rose garland and brings rose petals to scatter on her lover (*Met*. 2.16; cf. 3.25). In the story of Psyche and Cupid, moreover, Venus herself is seen dancing at the wedding that brings the story to its end, and she leaves the wedding feast covered with the flowers (*Met*. 6.11; cf. 6.24).[25]

Through the festival of the Rosalia, however, roses also had associations with death and resurrection, as flowers were placed by the living at the burial places of the dead in annual acts of springtime remembrance and renewal of memory, the result sometimes of testamentary provision by the deceased

themselves, whose tombs might have their own rose gardens. The Rosalia was a festival long preserved – it is attested well into the fourth century and beyond – and was celebrated even in military camps on the frontiers of empire, when soldiers festooned their standards each spring with flowers. The rose was also thought to have medicinal properties, unsurprisingly given the conventionally close connections in antiquity between medicine and magic; and the rose always brought thoughts of gardens (not just at tombs), places of delight and rest, providing inspirational sources of decoration for houses and villas. It is not a surprise, therefore, that Columella in his work on agriculture (*Rust*. 10. pr.; 11.2.19; 11.2.29) and Pliny in the *Natural History* (21.1–21) can provide many details on the history and cultivation of the rose, or that garland makers (*coronarii* or *coronariae*) should be well in evidence in artistic as well as literary sources. There was great demand for the fruits of their labours.[26]

As seen above, Isis and Venus were, or could be, one and the same. Representations of Isis in the Roman imperial age duly show the rose as one of her attributes, as also of her worshippers. When the garland is consumed in the last book of the *Metamorphoses*, what had once been Lucius's sexual love for Photis becomes a spiritual devotion to Isis. The rose is thus both a means of change and a symbol of Lucius's redemption. The rose had long in the story been Lucius's hope of salvation, his *spes salutis* (*Met*. 3.29), a notion conveyed not least by Apuleius's clever play at one point on the legal term *postliminium*, the restoration of a soldier's civic rights upon return from enemy capture and enslavement. Eventually, however, the rose assumes a transcendental power. One of the ironies of Apuleius's narrative is that this must be known to the Isiac devotee who tells the story all along, though his reader cannot be aware of his 'conversion' until the story's end.[27]

What is particularly notable is that just as Apuleius was creating his story of miraculous metamorphosis, Christians were drawing on the rose as their symbol of salvation and entry into the garden of paradise. In Christian martyrologies from the second and third centuries, those who enter the next world after their earthly ordeals commonly wear the martyr's unfading crown, a garland of flowers referred to as the crown of immortality. This in effect is what the priest's garland becomes for Apuleius's Lucius. Sometimes in Christian sources the rose is given special prominence. It appears in the garden of heaven, a *uiridarium*, as envisioned by Saturus in the *Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicity* (11.5–6), to which Saturus and Perpetua are transported, and where a rose bush figures as a site of reconciliation (13.4). It appears also in the *Martyrdom of Marian and James* (11.4–6), when the prisoner James has a vision shortly before his execution and sees a young boy coming to meet him: the boy is already in heaven, at a banquet, and he

prepares James for his own impending arrival; he carries a palm branch in his hand and wears on his head a garland of roses, clear indications of the victory over death and the promise of eternal life that for James are soon to come. But unlike the earthly rose that quickly fades, the heavenly rose lasts forever. Appropriately enough, therefore, Christians in their funerary art began to use the rose – and the figure of the garland maker – to express ideas of resurrection and eternal life.[28]

In the age of Apuleius, the mysteries of Isis and the mysteries of the new Christian god converged in their deployment of the rose. But the demands they made upon their followers remained profoundly different, and forever irreconcilable.

3

Romanitas and the Roman Family: The Evidence of Apuleius's *Apology*

At the turn of the third century the theologian Tertullian urged the people of Carthage to abandon the Roman toga everywhere evident in their midst and to resume use of the Greek-styled mantle they had favoured long ago. For the new Christian philosopher, it seemed, the *pallium*, the traditional garment of earlier philosophers, was an appropriate item of dress to wear, whereas the toga was a symbol of an all-pervasive Roman presence that threatened to eradicate in the city, now long subject to Roman rule, any remaining sense of local identity and cultural distinctiveness. It was a symbol indeed of *Romanitas*, which as anyone who listened to Tertullian would have known was visible in Carthage, as throughout North Africa, not only in dress but especially in the city's public architecture: for with its temples, porticoes, and basilicas, its amphitheatre, theatre, and circus, Carthage had become over the first two centuries of the imperial age a veritable showplace of Roman urban design, an example of that *urbanitas* which could be considered a prime constituent of *Romanitas*. Tertullian's acerbic assault on the toga might be judged a simple display of rhetorical, or fanatical, brilliance. But underlying the speech is an objection to the imposition on a provincial community of Roman imperial rule and the patterns of culture that accompanied it. It is this that gives the *De pallio* its special meaning.[1]

My concern in this essay is with the socio-cultural impact of Rome half a century earlier on an African city and its inhabitants far less celebrated than Carthage, namely, Oea in Tripolitania. This was the city of which Apuleius's wife, Aemilia Pudentilla, a widow when he met her, and the Sicinii, those who brought him to trial in 158/9 at Sabratha, were residents, as is known of course from the *Apology*, the speech of self-defence Apuleius made at his trial. To historians of the Roman family, the *Apology* is of special interest because it provides the fullest historical record of a widow and those

associated with her that has survived from Roman antiquity. Evidently enough it is a tendentious document, given that it presents only one side of a dispute and is the work of a male author, but the degree of personal information it contains makes Apuleius's speech an exceptional social document. It has accordingly attracted much attention. My purpose here, however, is to ask how 'Roman' the case history of Pudentilla actually was, that is, to ask in what sense the *Apology* can be used as evidence of Roman family life. In answering the question I shall want to stress the importance of examining the events Apuleius records within their immediate geographical and cultural context.[2]

I raise the question against the background of the rise to prominence of Roman family studies in the last generation, which has led among other things to a much clearer understanding of the demographic structure of Roman society, the nature of marriage and the roles played by children in family life, and the importance of determining, in terms appropriate to antiquity itself, how the family was conceptualized. Predictably the first wave of this work has been highly Romanocentric in character, by which I mean that when provincial evidence has been used for family history (epigraphic evidence, for instance), its local context has not received a great deal of attention, so that families have tended to be assimilated one to another as if the effect of regional context on their history did not matter. The result is that the Roman family has been treated as an undifferentiated monolith. An increased sensitivity, however, to the importance of considering possible local variations, traditions, and conditions in family history has begun to arise – Roman Britain offers one illustration – and it is from this point of departure that an examination of Apuleius's evidence is worthwhile. As an example of the variations that might come into play, it is notable that survivals of traditional polygamy have been postulated in North Africa well into Apuleius's era and beyond that stand in sharp contrast to traditional Roman monogamy.[3]

The approach I am entertaining, I admit at once, is discouraged by two factors. First, the *Apology* is written in Latin and so naturally disposes the reader, especially the literary reader, to think in terms of the city of Rome, inviting an obvious comparison with the legal speeches of Cicero. The connection, moreover, can seem more appealing still given that Cicero's *Letters* offer one of the very few detailed sources of Roman family history with which the events of the *Apology*, and the theme of family conflict underlying them, can be compared. Second, any reader of the *Apology* will be struck from the beginning by the many references it contains to Roman legal forms and practices, and the truth can hardly be denied that the speech had its origin in the exercise of Roman justice by a provincial Roman governor.

This, too, encourages the *Apology*'s construction in essentially 'Roman' terms. My inclination, nonetheless, is to resist the Romanocentric tendency of the speech, and to insist that the family history it records be considered in purely local terms. The question becomes one, therefore, of assessing the impact of *Romanitas* on the family, broadly understood, of which Apuleius himself became a member through his marriage to the widow Pudentilla.[4]

I

Apuleius arrived in Oea three years or so before his trial. Aged about thirty, he was en route to Alexandria to continue the series of educational expeditions that had dominated his life so far. He broke his winter journey at Oea to recover from fatigue, and was visited there by a young man he had previously known as a fellow-student in Athens. This was Sicinius Pontianus, Pudentilla's elder son, who was anxious to find a new husband for his mother, a widow aged about forty, fearing that he might lose his inheritance if an unsuitable suitor married Pudentilla and misappropriated her wealth. After her first husband's death, Pudentilla had been blackmailed by her father-in-law into agreeing to marry another of his sons, Sicinius Clarus, but after a formal betrothal she had managed to forestall the marriage for fourteen years, and now that the father-in-law was dead she was in a position free to choose a husband for herself. Sicinius Aemilianus, another of the elder Sicinius's sons, hoped that Pudentilla would still marry Clarus, and he encouraged Pontianus in this view because he wanted to keep Pudentilla's wealth in his family's control. But then Apuleius arrived on the scene. At Pontianus's instigation Apuleius moved into Pudentilla's house, and about a year later, with Pontianus's full approval, he and the widow decided to marry. At that point, however, Pontianus suddenly changed his mind. Herennius Rufinus, his own new father-in-law, also had designs on Pudentilla's money, and with the connivance of Aemilianus he turned Pontianus against Apuleius. Yet Pudentilla would not be dissuaded from the decision she had made, and two months later she and Apuleius were married at her country villa. To this state of affairs Herennius and Aemilianus immediately responded with a slanderous campaign against Apuleius, supported by Pontianus and his brother Pudens. Apuleius was quickly able to reconcile the mother and her sons, but Pontianus soon died when returning from a visit to Carthage. This did not prevent Aemilianus and Herennius from continuing their assault on Apuleius – they were afraid that Pudentilla's money would all be lost to them – and matters came to a head when, in Pudens's name, they brought charges of practising magic against him. The verdict of the trial is not recorded, but Apuleius subsequently took up residence in Carthage and it is

usually assumed that he was acquitted. Pudentilla may well have accompanied him to Carthage: Apuleius is known to have had a son, Faustinus, and no other wife is on record for him, so it is entirely possible that Pudentilla was Faustinus's mother. Nothing further, however, is heard of her.[5]

There are many details in the *Apology*, especially legal or quasi-legal details, to suggest that the events I have just summarized were played out in a city thoroughly permeated by Roman culture. Pudentilla herself is seen to be subject to the *tutela* of a male guardian (*Apol*. 101.6), as Roman law required, even though the institution of guardianship in the Antonine age was effectively meaningless. Her betrothal to Sicinius Clarus, the arrangement of the dowry she brought to Apuleius, even the local registration of her birth, to which Apuleius refers when proving that the prosecution had exaggerated her age (*Apol*. 68.5; 91.7–92.1; 89.5), are all items consistent with patterns of Roman law or custom and imply a deep penetration of Roman institutional forms into local Tripolitanian society. On their father's death, moreover, Pontianus and Pudens are said to have assumed the legal status of *pupilli* in relation to their grandfather and to have remained in his power (*Apol*. 68.2), so that *patria potestas*, the quintessential mark of *Romanitas* according to the contemporary jurist Gaius (*Inst*. 1.55), is also much in evidence. Again, and important at a socio-cultural level, Sicinius Pudens's arrival at adult estate is marked by his assumption of the *toga uirilis* in the traditional Roman manner, an event that provided an opportunity for the display of civic generosity on the part of his mother in a fashion typical of the Roman decurial elite (*Apol*. 87.10; cf. 70.7; 73.9). It is hardly surprising, therefore, to find Pontianus described as a *splendidissimus eques* (*Apol*. 62.4: 'a most honourable knight'): he belonged to a family of Roman citizens who had absorbed many Roman socio-cultural norms, and who were soon to contribute members to Rome's governing class. It would be easy as a result to characterize Pudentilla's family as a Roman family.[6]

The significance of these details for understanding Tripolitanian *Romanitas* is not at all to be underestimated. But because they come from an inherently Romanocentric source, they stand in isolation from other, local, elements of culture to which it was not important to Apuleius to refer. In order to bring those elements to attention, and thereby understand better the nature of the conflict that developed in Pudentilla's family, I want at this stage to consider precisely who Pudentilla was and where she lived.

The conventional Roman nomenclature of North Africa derives from two main sources: Romans and Italians who migrated there in the late Republican period and early imperial age and left descendants to succeed them; and grants of citizenship to locals from temporarily resident Roman officials. Italian immigration in Tripolitania is attested in the late Republican

age by the case of the Sicilian T. Herennius, who is known from Cicero (*Verr.* 2.5.155–6) to have become a banker at Lepcis Magna, the principal city of the region, and to whom Tripolitanian Herennii of the mid-second century such as Herennius Rufinus may have owed their name. In contrast to other areas of North Africa, however, Tripolitania was relatively untouched by Italian settlement, and in the first century it was the local, native elite who held power and developed the coastal cities of Sabratha, Oea, and Lepcis, which were not Roman colonial foundations but independent peregrine communities in an area relatively under-urbanized in comparison with other North African regions.[7]

An a priori case exists therefore for believing that Aemilia Pudentilla was not a descendant of Romans or Italians, but a woman of native, particularly Punic, stock. Her *gentilicium* may have originated from a grant of citizenship to an ancestor made by the triumvir M. Aemilius Lepidus or from some other influential Aemilius, but the attractive suggestion has been made that 'Aemilius' was simply a Latinizing form of a native name adopted because of its similarity to a local form, as appears to be the case with Iddibal Himilis f. Caphada Aemilius, a dignitary known from an early first-century inscription from Lepcis (*IRT* 324). The diminutive suffix is especially characteristic of North African names.[8]

In either case, a local origin for Pudentilla's family seems more than likely, and even more so because of her *cognomen* and the related name borne by her younger son. Punic names were characteristically theophoric in origin, and the Romanizing upper classes of North Africa typically assumed Latin names that retained their religious or moralistic connotations. 'Pudentilla' and 'Pudens' are names that fit this pattern, so that all in all an African ancestry for Pudentilla seems highly plausible. The same is probably true of the Sicinii, the inheritors of a name relatively rare in Italy, taken perhaps by an ancestor from a visiting patron. Pudentilla's first husband was named Sicinius Amicus, and the notion that his *cognomen* was a Latinizing form of a Punic name such as Amilcar is consistent with another well-established aspect of North African naming conventions.[9]

I stress the probable native origin of Pudentilla and others close to her not to suggest that the leading families of Tripolitania were uninterested in adopting the trappings of Roman culture, or that their status was adversely affected by their local origins, but to emphasize that the Tripolitanian elite cannot uncritically be assumed to be Roman or Italian families who simply happened to be somewhere other than Rome or Italy. They were, distinctively, Tripolitanians, and their appetite for *Romanitas* notwithstanding they cannot be expected to have quickly or completely left behind all traces of their local cultural legacy. Indeed, the vitality of their culture can be

amply demonstrated in the age of Apuleius, which means that Tripolitanian patterns of family life were not necessarily those of Roman or Italian families, and that even if they were, they provide no evidence of 'Roman' family behaviour as such unless regionally defined. One pattern worth observing was a tradition of upper-class, and perhaps rather closed upper-class, intermarriage at Oea, for the Sicinii and the Aemilii had been united before Pudentilla's marriage to Sicinius Amicus, as the name of Apuleius's prosecutor Sicinius Aemilianus indicates. The tightness of the bond is implicit in the elder Sicinius's determination to have Pudentilla remain in his family through a marriage to Sicinius Clarus.[10]

What was Oea like when Apuleius first arrived there? In view of the minimal archaeological and epigraphical evidence that has survived, this is a difficult question to answer and the best that can be done is to form an impression based chiefly on evidence from Sabratha and Lepcis. It is notable, to begin, that there was no locally distinctive style of public architecture in these cities, a fact that has been explained as the result of a preference for imitation and borrowing on the part of Punic artisans that long antedated the Roman period. In its general physical appearance, consequently, Oea probably resembled Sabratha and Lepcis, displaying any number of classically 'Roman' buildings similar to those known from the better-preserved sites. The remains of the city plan and the arch of Marcus Aurelius at Oea suggest so. On the other hand, a visitor travelling along the great highway that linked Carthage with Tripolitania and beyond, as Apuleius travelled until halting at Oea, might well have noticed the occasional structure or monument that impressed upon him the singularity of the region in which he was journeying. At Lepcis in the reign of Vespasian a temple was dedicated to the Magna Mater by a certain Iddibal, son of Balsillec, grandson of Annobal, great-grandson of Asmun, that was not at all classical in style, but seemingly followed a type of temple construction common in the Punic world in which a small sanctuary was built on one side of an otherwise open sacred enclosure to house a cult object. Moreover, if Apuleius had chanced to see in Sabratha, a city he must have passed through before he reached Oea, the remnant of a pre-Roman mausoleum south of the forum which then survived as a buttress for the houses built around it, he may well have observed how Oriental and Greek traditions had once, long ago, been combined by Punic artists of the Hellenistic age to create something of a regional artistic style, evidence of which there may still have been in Oea itself. In any case, although the city was predominantly 'Roman' in form and architecture, this can hardly have been true of every aspect of its life. From the many temples and shrines unearthed at Sabratha and Lepcis and the accompanying evidence of inscriptions and coins, it is possible to see that the religious life

of the coastal cities was very heterogeneous, with gods of Roman, Greek, Egyptian, and Oriental origin all having their place in the total mix. There was also a strong Phoenician-Punic element in Tripolitanian religious life, and it is here above all that the vitality of local culture, and the character of the city in which Apuleius found his wife, can best be understood.[11]

Consider the following items. An inscribed votive dish (*labrum*) belonging to the late first or early second century found just outside Sabratha provides evidence for the cult of Ba'al Hammon. Also just outside Sabratha, but in a different direction, an open-air sanctuary for the worship of Tanit is in evidence which was well in use in the early second century. At Lepcis there was a temple in the old forum to Milk'Ashtart, built in the age of Augustus, while the cult of Shadrapa is known from a first-century inscription recording the erection, also in the forum, of a statue to the god. These are just a few indications of what must have been flourishing cults in the age of Apuleius, traditional cults of Semitic deities whose unfamiliarity and exotic character, compared with the members of the Greco-Roman pantheon, expose a dimension of the cultural context in which Apuleius's family history was acted out that can scarcely be imagined from the *Apology*. In Apuleius's speech gods do indeed make their presence felt, but only in Greco-Roman form. That dimension, moreover, becomes all the more arresting once it is recognized that the religious inscriptions to which I have referred were written either in Neo-Punic or bilingually in Neo-Punic and Latin. The rim of the votive dish has a bilingual inscription which allows the Punic Ba'al to be identified with the Latinate Saturnus, though the name actually given on the dish is 'Sapurnus,' an error attributable to ignorance of Latin on the part of the local artisan who cut the letters. Similarly, the inscription recording the statue of Shadrapa is bilingual, the Shadrapa of the Neo-Punic version becoming Liber Pater in the Latin version. The dedication was made by Bodmelqart son of Muthumbaal. Shadrapa is also known from a Neo-Punic inscription from Lepcis in which he and Milk'Ashtart are honoured as the patron gods of the city.[12]

To observe the Punic element in the religious life of the apparently 'Roman' cities of Sabratha and Lepcis is not only to appreciate the range of the cities' religious forms and practices, but to understand as well that Neo-Punic was a living language spoken by many, perhaps the majority, of the local inhabitants, the elite included, and a language that through the medium of public inscriptions was seen by everyone. The well-educated Pudentilla was proficient in Greek as well as Latin, and it was not least for the rarity of the achievement that elite Africans publicly celebrated their command of both languages, as Apuleius himself did, in the *Apology* and elsewhere. Greek and Latin, however, were intrusive languages, of appeal to the Romanizing

elite, but not the natural languages of the mass of the population; and while Latin eventually came to predominate as the language of civic inscriptions, that is no guide at all to the language of the streets. Apuleius's rhetorical claim in the *Apology* that Sicinius Pudens spoke mostly Punic should not be dismissed as mere invective.[13]

The bilingual inscriptions and the assimilation of Punic and Roman gods represented on them point to a process of cultural adaptation far from complete when Apuleius was in Tripolitania. The new ways of Rome increased in visibility during the first two centuries of the imperial age as elite appetites for them gradually grew, but this was a process that was still ongoing in the middle of the second century. It is best reflected in the dates of the coastal cities' formalization as Roman colonies: Lepcis, made a *municipium* in the period 74–7, became a *colonia* in 109, but Oea and Sabratha are not attested as colonies until later in the second century. Indeed, it may have been just when Apuleius was in Oea that the city's status was advanced from *municipium* to colony, but equally likely most of its citizens were not yet Roman citizens. In both cases an indication appears of the limited 'Roman' character of the city when Apuleius was there. The process is also evident in the nomenclature of the dedicant recorded on a Neo-Punic dedication from Lepcis to another Punic god, El Qone Aras: 'To the Lord El, master (or creator) of the earth, Candidus, son of Candidus, son of Hanno, son of Bodmelqart, has built and consecrated this exedra and this portico at his own expense, because he (El) has heard his voice and blessed him.' Here Candidus's father, obviously a man of native stock, had either been given a Latin name by his father or assumed it himself, and handed it on to his son. But it was still natural for the son to give thanks to a Punic god and to express himself in Punic alone: a Roman counterpart to the god and a complementary Latin text he judged unnecessary. The process, however, was not one in which local forms were simply replaced by those of the dominant political power. The Punic gods, which had once themselves been new arrivals in Tripolitania and in some instances had been assimilated to indigenous local deities, could be identified with the gods of Rome, but the product of such identification was the emergence of peculiarly regionalized divine hybrids, so that the 'Roman' gods of Tripolitania never became exactly the gods of the city of Rome itself.[14]

Altogether, therefore, the city of Oea in which Apuleius unexpectedly took up residence towards the middle of the second century should be regarded as a culturally diverse and polyglot community, and, with a population of probably fewer than 30,000, a rather small community. In the religious sphere the blend of Roman and native seen elsewhere is perceptible in a fragmentary bilingual dedication to Apollo in which Latin and Neo-Punic proper names appear, and perhaps also in the remains of the pediment of a small

temple to the Genius of the colony, where four of the original five figures of deities can still be seen: in the centre stands the Tyche of Oea, while flanking her are the city's patron gods, Apollo and Minerva, and on the outside one of the Dioscuri (the other has disappeared). The Tyche is dressed in a full, buckled tunic and wears a turreted crown on her head, the dress, it has seemed to some, of the African but Latinized Caelestis, who was assimilated to Tanit. The attribution has been disputed, but the lack of scholarly consensus on the issue is itself indicative of the ambiguous identity of the deity, who could in effect be whoever the contemporary viewer wanted her to be. The inscription below the pediment indicates that the temple was dedicated in 183/4 by a Roman senator who had risen to hold the proconsulship of Asia. His name was L. Aemilius Frontinus, and he had a brother who was also a member of the Roman senate. The two may well have been related to Aemilia Pudentilla. Against the background I have sketched, however, Pudentilla herself cannot be regarded as a more or less conventional Roman *matrona* simply because senators were later to come from her family.[15]

At this point it is worth pausing for a moment to note that Apuleius tells in the *Apology* (55.10–11) of a speech he gave soon after he arrived in Oea in which he celebrated the god Aesculapius, implying that he spoke to an audience who knew the god. The cult of Aesculapius at Oea cannot be independently confirmed, but there is little reason to doubt that its inhabitants knew the divinity: Aesculapius is attested at Lepcis and, to the west, at Gigthis, another town Apuleius is likely to have seen himself. Apuleius also refers in the *Apology* (55.8) to the worship of Liber Pater, to the god's mysteries and the sacred objects scrupulously kept by his initiates among those present at the trial in Sabratha. Again his word is hardly to be questioned, not least because an inscription from Oea records an offering of elephant tusks to the god, and an inscription from Sabratha identifies a man, also a Pudens, who was *flamen Liberi patris*. The cult is widely attested in Africa. Aesculapius and Liber were regular members of the Roman pantheon. By the majority of the local population, however, and especially by those who heard Apuleius's speech and those who understood his reference to the mysteries, they were probably conceptualized more in their Punic than in their Roman forms, as Eshmun and Shadrapa. Again this could never be told from Apuleius's Latin text and his scrupulous avoidance before his judge of any reference to local Punic religious protocols.[16]

II

The cultural singularity of the Tripolitanian cities provides the essential background against which the events of the *Apology* must be assessed. It

also gives reason to suppose that Tripolitanian social relations might have had locally distinctive features, a point to which I shall return shortly. First, however, in returning to some of the details of Apuleius's family history, I consider next two aspects of the conflict that led to the trial that seem at first sight to be typically 'Roman.'

Pudentilla married her first husband at about the age of fifteen. When her husband died she was left with two sons, one an infant, the other aged about eleven, and at less than thirty she was still capable of giving birth to more children. Remarriage therefore might have seemed predictable, and was indeed technically required by Roman law. Pudentilla, however, was not permitted to choose a second husband for herself, but had to endure the betrothal to Sicinius Clarus until she found herself in a more independent position. Then, a little over forty, but with the prospect of more children not utterly lost, she married Apuleius and introduced a stepfather into her sons' lives. The emotional or affective impact of the stepfather on the sons is unlikely to have been as telling as it might have been with much younger children: Pontianus, entering his late twenties, was of marriageable age and had in any case known Apuleius for several years, while Pudens, assuming the *toga uirilis*, was aged about sixteen. Nonetheless the appearance of a stepfather brought potential legal complications into any son's life, and it was to counter such difficulties that Pontianus had originally conceived the idea that Apuleius should marry his mother.[17]

A stepfather's presence in the lives of offspring from a previous marriage was hardly unusual in Roman society broadly judged. Early marriage and childbearing, together with the possibility, if not likelihood, of remarriage and the creation of a blended family were prospects that all elite Roman women could expect to face, a situation with which Pudentilla's experience is demographically consistent, so to speak. That the prospect of remarriage on the early death of a spouse was shared in Oea is evident from the reaction to his son's death of the elder Sicinius: Pudentilla was to remarry, and quickly; and, fourteen years later, from the reactions and actions of Pontianus, Aemilianus, and Herennius: a second marriage even at this later stage was still regarded as normative. There was no objection, therefore, to the appearance of a stepfather in the sons' lives, which in Oea as elsewhere must have been an uncontroversial commonplace of family life. All that was at issue was who would choose him.[18]

One of the principal elements to emerge from her history is the degree of male control to which Pudentilla's life as a widow was subject. Apart from the elder Sicinius's tactic of using blackmail to prevent her from considering proposals from her other suitors (and suitors there were), Aemilianus's attempt to persuade Pontianus to accept his view that Pudentilla should marry

Clarus is notable, and likewise Herennius's assumption that as a relative by marriage he too could influence Pudentilla's choice of husband. It was their intention, clearly enough, that the authority long exercised by the Sicinii over Pudentilla should be maintained indefinitely. It is Pontianus's role as matchmaker, however, that is especially striking, for he is the one who, quite independently, identified the candidate he wanted as stepfather and who persuaded both Apuleius and Pudentilla to accept an arrangement that best served his interests. Before Apuleius's arrival in Oea, Pudentilla had expressed her own general wish to remarry (there were still suitors for her to consider), and once the decision to marry Apuleius was taken, she remained committed to it. But the key role in making the decision was played by her elder son.[19]

Again, there is nothing remarkable in all this from a broad Roman point of view. In cases of remarriage, elite Roman women were sometimes allowed more freedom to choose a spouse than when they first married, but this was not always the case and second and third marriages could, as here, remain collective decisions for families to make. In the best documented history of a Roman family, that of Cicero, Cicero's adult nephew Quintus fully expected to be involved in the remarriage arrangements of his own father and on one occasion vigorously objected to the candidacy of a potential stepmother. Thus the remarriage of Pudentilla again conforms to standard Roman models of family behaviour, most notably in the way the men's negotiations focused on the criteria of the bride's wealth, her sexual status, her appearance, and her age. The way in which Apuleius characterized his marriage in court as a union based on *concordia* and *mutuus amor* (not romantic love), intended in the first instance for the procreation of heirs, is also consistent with conventional Roman marital ideology. The *Apology* as a whole indeed leaves an inescapable impression of the life of the family as the life of a kin network embracing a wide circle of relatives and relatives by marriage that again compares favourably with the earlier history of Cicero's family.[20]

Apuleius's trial undoubtedly resulted in part from his role as a stepfather and in part from the struggle for control over Pudentilla among her male relatives. But being a stepfather and being implicated in a patriarchal web were conditions that could apply anywhere in the Roman world, and they are insufficient by themselves to explain why hostility to Apuleius became so rampant. It is to the immediate setting in which the events took place, therefore, that attention has to turn, and to two particular details: first, the way Apuleius attributes to the elder Sicinius the view that Pudentilla should not be permitted to marry outside the family (*Apol*. 68.4: *extrario*), and second, the way he attributes to Herennius Rufinus the view that Pudentilla should not be permitted to marry a man who can be branded a *homo extrarius*

(*Apol.* 77.2), a man not just outside the kin network, but a complete stranger. It is the implications of this vocabulary that are important.[21]

III

First, the elder Sicinius's dictate. The *Apology* hints at another attempt by a family head, Herennius Rufinus, to marry a widowed female dependant to the brother of a deceased spouse, but this time it is a daughter, not a daughter-in-law. Rufinus was clearly a figure of some eminence at Oea despite the vilification Apuleius heaps upon him, wealthy, if sometimes in straitened circumstances, and perhaps even of equestrian status. His daughter's marriage to Pontianus resembles the marriages between the Sicinii and the Aemilii, and suggests a pattern of locally prominent families concentrating wealth among themselves through convenient marital alliances rather than dispersing wealth by admitting outsiders to their circle. The young Herennia, however, soon found herself on the marriage market a second time when Pontianus died an untimely death, and Herennius at once favoured allotting her to the much younger Pudens, evidently to keep alive both the union between the two families and his daughter's long-term financial prospects (Pontianus had left her practically nothing in his will). The sequel to his initiatives is unrecorded, but the overtures he made, together with the actions of the elder Sicinius concerning Pudentilla, suggest something of a regional tradition of close family alliances maintained especially through the remarriage of women to brothers of deceased husbands that was not typical of elite Roman life. From a Romanocentric standpoint, the elder Sicinius's insistence that Pudentilla remain within his family seems tyrannical and mercenary. But it is possible, though this can only be a speculation, that the father-in-law's actions represent the local survival of a form of levirate marriage of the kind practised in some earlier Near Eastern societies and maintained well into the medieval era, particularly among Jews (closely connected culturally to the Phoenicians). If this were the import of the single word *extrario*, Pudentilla would become less of a victim, and the communal nature of local family organization more suggestible, than Apuleius's Latin text indicates.[22]

Second, and more important, the *homo extrarius*. From the viewpoint of the interested parties in the small world of Oea – Sicinius Aemilianus and Sicinius Clarus, their nephews, Herennius Rufinus, and perhaps even Pudentilla's suitors (presumably local men) – the problem Apuleius presented was twofold: he was a complete outsider, and he embodied, to an extraordinary degree, the intrusive ways of Rome that in this culturally diverse society were potential sources of friction. To consider his earlier

history is to see how the prospect of becoming Pudentilla's husband brought that potential to the fore.

The record of Apuleius's early life is no more than skeletal: birth in Madauros to a family of decurial status, a period in Carthage as a boy for his early education, a period in Athens as a young man for higher studies, especially rhetoric and philosophy, and a period in Rome during which (in all likelihood) he practised law. He then set out for Alexandria, a city of obvious appeal to a man of literary and intellectual disposition, but found himself detained at Oea instead. The outline is clear enough. In its brevity, however, the record conceals the extent to which the many years spent in study and travel produced in Apuleius a figure typical of the western intellectual elite of his day, in that he was a figure devoted to learning, *doctrina*, in all its manifold aspects. The abundant literary and philosophical allusions of the *Apology* alone provide ample evidence of the catholic knowledge Apuleius had come to command by the time of his trial, but a later recollection of a visit made to Samos during his Athenian period, through the description of a statue he had once seen, illustrates how Apuleius's knowledge extended beyond literature and philosophy to embrace a connoisseur's appreciation of art, and permits a hint of his general intellectual formation as a young man.[23]

For centuries, Samos had been renowned as a centre of the cult of Hera, who was said to have been born there and who was still worshipped in the ancient temple that Apuleius visited. Years later he recalled the features of the place, its location, its agricultural character, the decline of its city, its plentiful population, its visitors. But he remembered too how he had been impressed by the temple and the great collection of gold and silver dedications that were housed there. Vast numbers of bronzes were to be seen, and the impact they made upon him can be inferred from the manner in which he describes a representation of a *citharoedus* thought, wrongly he shows, to portray Samos's most famous son, the philosopher Pythagoras. With what seems like a photographic memory, he offers a meticulous account of the hair and facial features of the citharode, the flow of the statue's drapery and the singer's pose – it seemed, he says, as though the singer were positioned as if to sing for Hera herself – revealing in the process something of the detail and depth of the knowledge he gained in his youth. The *Metamorphoses* is likewise full of references to works like those on Samos that Apuleius had contemplated and studied on his travels – the description of the statuary of Diana and Actaeon in Byrrhaena's atrium is the most obvious example (*Met.* 2.4) – and the same interest is evident in the *Apology* (63.7–8) in the description of a statuette of Mercury Apuleius brought into court as an exhibit in his defence. It was an interest of long standing, and one not immediately apparent from the brief biographical testimonia.[24]

Much of Apuleius's knowledge was philosophical knowledge, and the *Apology* was indeed constructed as a veritable defence of Philosophy, in the abstract. To a large extent accordingly Apuleius's knowledge was Greek knowledge, and the influence upon him of contemporary Greek sophists might well be judged paramount. Perhaps it was. Yet in his speech Apuleius deliberately distanced himself from figures of this sort, cultivating instead a Roman image to which the study of philosophy was no impediment. Rome in fact had a long history of educating young men in philosophy as part of their rhetorical training without any risk to their Roman identity. The role of philosophy in education advocated and represented by Cicero is evidence enough. In the *De oratore* Cicero's interlocutors debate philosophy's place in the shaping of the Roman orator, Crassus making a strong case for ethical preparation even if natural philosophy and dialectic can be set aside, and Antonius countering, though learnedly so, with the view that philosophy has nothing to do with real life and is therefore unnecessary. The debate is artfully contrived to demonstrate on the one hand how Cicero, the greatest orator of all, has total command of the whole Greek philosophical tradition at his disposal, and to show on the other hand that philosophy is a requisite for achieving the oratorical perfection he personifies. Antonius duly concedes that the philosopher, through his study of all things human and divine and his quest for living a morally upright life, has a unique claim to omniscience. In the *Orator*, moreover, Cicero maintains that the roots of oratory are to be found in philosophy, so that knowledge of the Greek tradition is vital: all three branches of philosophy can give the orator practical assistance, helping him to organize his material, informing him of the world around him, and explaining human nature to him. Further, philosophical knowledge is essential for the ability to speak effectively on such common ethical themes as religion, death, piety, love of country, good and evil, virtue and vice, obligation, pain and pleasure, and the perturbations and errors of the mind. And it is not only ethical philosophy that the orator needs, but in order to understand the world of the divine natural philosophy too. Philosophy, Cicero summarily states in the *Brutus*, is the mother of everything that is said or done well.[25]

A century and more later, following Cicero's lead, Quintilian made a similarly earnest plea for the young Roman orator to study philosophy. Like the orator himself, philosophy is concerned with justice, truth, and goodness, though philosophers are not to be emulated: they are men divorced from public life, whereas the ideal orator is to be very much engaged in civic affairs and statecraft, becoming wise in a Roman sense as he learns from a life lived not in the study but in the performance of civic obligations. Nonetheless, the young orator must go to the philosophers and read the

canon of great books with them; and he must have that knowledge of all matters human and divine which the three branches of philosophy will give him: in its preoccupation with the precise meaning of words, dialectic will help him move and delight as well as instruct his audience; since the oratory of the courts always involves moral issues, the value of ethical study is obvious; and because the role of providence and religion in human affairs must equally be understood, the study of physics, subsuming ethics, is also essential. In Quintilian's view, the orator is not to become a devotee of a particular philosophical creed, but should adopt an eclectic approach, taking what is best from all the schools. Philosophy, in sum, is elevating, and the command of philosophical knowledge distinguishes the educated few from the uneducated many.[26]

The positions of Cicero and Quintilian were idealistic, and it cannot be assumed that every young Roman made the serious study of Greek philosophy they recommended. But Cicero and Quintilian effectively prove that from the age of the late Republic onwards, the Greek philosophical tradition was part and parcel of the Roman cultural tradition, so that there was nothing intrinsically un-Roman about philosophy itself. It was all a matter of proportion, the extent to which philosophy was not allowed to detract from greater responsibilities, the degree to which it could prove fruitful for Roman concerns and preoccupations. Two generations at most separated Quintilian from the date of Apuleius's trial, by which time knowledge of the Greek philosophical canon had long been a mark of elite Roman status. If Apuleius had studied Greek philosophy in Carthage and Athens, it was in an utterly Roman tradition of learning that he did so.

With its many allusions to poets and its deft control of history and the law, the *Apology* reflects the importance in that tradition of all the other essential ingredients of *doctrina* on which Cicero and Quintilian had expatiated. For Cicero, *doctrina* encompassed history, poetry, and law as well as philosophy, and the perfect orator was to exploit them all with humour and a capacity to rouse the emotions of his audience. Quintilian also assumed that his ideal orator would be a man of great learning, the acquisition of which would begin in childhood and never cease. He recommended in detail which authors, Greek and Latin, should be read, and like Cicero stressed the benefits of composition, especially of poetry. He can hardly contain himself on the value of knowing civil law, while knowledge of Roman history is crucial because the deeds and sayings of past heroes will provide a storehouse of examples of Roman virtues the orator needs to introduce into his speeches: *fortitudo, iustitia, frugalitas, fides, continentia, contemptus doloris ac mortis*. Consciousness of a Roman cultural identity is very pronounced, and the self-confidence of the Roman rhetorical tradition equally firm: *Quantum*

enim Graeci praeceptis ualent, tantum Romani, quod est maius, exemplis (*Inst*. 12.2.30: 'Rome is as strong in examples as Greece is in precepts; and examples are more important'). If, moreover, there were any doubt that the ideals represented by Cicero and Quintilian were still relevant to the age of Apuleius, they are dispelled by the pages of Fronto's correspondence, where the contemporary importance of everything Cicero and Quintilian had written is reiterated: daily practice in verse composition, declamatory exercises on themes the courtier is anxious to recommend, practice in using figures of speech such as the simile, reading from the classic Greek and Roman authors (including philosophers) – these are all topics to be found in Fronto, and everything that constituted *doctrina* in the age of Cicero still flourishes in his world and conveys advantage in the public domain. *Doctrina* was the Roman's path to power.[27]

It is against the background of, and even within, the Roman rhetorical tradition that Apuleius's self-image in the *Apology* is best perceived and understood. Despite the undeniable importance to him of the Greek philosophical, and especially Platonist legacy, he draws a firm distinction in his speech between Greek achievements and those of the Romans, and it is with the latter that he firmly positions himself. The Greek writers of lyric poetry are separated from the Latin poets he considers his own. A catalogue of impoverished Greeks, introduced for rhetorical effect, is marked off from those who belong to the history of the Roman people. He sniffs at 'Greek eloquence,' and he distinguishes the Greek name for epilepsy from the way 'we' Romans define it, just as he distinguishes the Persian word for priest, *magus*, from 'our' Latin word, *sacerdos*. (So too in *De mundo* [17] Vesuvius is 'our' Vesuvius.) Although he clearly seeks to establish a bond with his judge, a man of philosophical inclination like himself, Apuleius's cultural centre of gravity is not in doubt, and this explains why so many of the historical allusions in the speech, as Cicero and Quintilian had taught, are taken from the Roman historical tradition. Arguing the point that to be poor is no disgrace, he appeals first to the precedents of C. Fabricius, Cn. Scipio, and M. Curius, whose daughters were dowered from public funds because their fathers were too poor to provide for them; second, to Publicola, who drove out the kings, and to Agrippa, who reconciled patricians and plebeians, men who were buried with the help of public donations because they lacked resources of their own; and finally to the impoverished Atilius Regulus, whose small estate was likewise farmed at the public expense. Despite his provincial origins, through the assimilating effects of education and travel Apuleius had fully absorbed the traditional idioms of Roman culture by the time he arrived in Oea, and expressed himself in terms he had come to regard as his own. As a man of Roman *doctrina*, he

was rather different from the westerner who hellenized in the manner of the contemporary sophist Favorinus.[28]

IV

The *Apology* shows at one level how an obscure provincial might come through the pursuit of *doctrina* to acquire the culture of the Roman elite, a culture that depended not so much on geographical origin or place of residence as on personal identification with the Roman tradition through education and the economic resources needed to pay for it. Considered in the immediate surroundings in which it was delivered, the *Apology* also suggests something of the impact that elite Roman culture might have on a relatively small and isolated community which, when pre-Roman cultural elements were still everywhere, ineradicably apparent, found itself in the throes of adjusting, if not unwillingly, to the invasive presence of Rome's language, law, religion, and architecture, that is, to *Romanitas*. The fully fashioned Roman orator who suddenly appeared in their midst could dazzle the citizens of the local community with a speech on the majesty of Aesculapius, or unfold a panoply of learning and quash with his rhetorical brilliance those who knew far less than he. Before a like-minded judge he might even advert, in ways that few others would appreciate, to the subtleties of Platonic doctrine. There were some in Oea who resembled Apuleius and the cult of *doctrina* he personified – Pontianus for one, and Pudentilla's devotion to learning should not be forgotten: it was the opportunity for mutual *studia* that had provided an incentive for Apuleius, he claimed (*Apol*. 73.1), to lodge in the widow's house before he married her, and her intellectualism is not to be doubted. The lure of learning and the rewards to which it led could be great, and young men like Pontianus might set off to acquire as much of it as they could. But the Tripolitania of those who remained behind, those perhaps like Sicinius Aemilianus and Herennius Rufinus, was a place where Tanit, Ba'al Hammon, Shadrapa, Milk'Ashtart and El Qone Aras still held sway, where elephant tusks were still offered to the gods, and where the spoken language of the majority was not the language of Rome.

In the closed and clannish community of Oea, it follows, to those used to exercising power in traditional ways, the appearance of a Roman polymath was a challenge to everything for which they stood. In a city where native traditions could not be denied, and which was still learning to accept the dominant culture of Rome – learning, that is, to replace the *pallium* with the toga – the *homo extrarius* represented a level of *Romanitas* that exposed and exacerbated the cultural tensions naturally inherent in the process of Romanization, bringing into question the ability of the local elite to

maintain power as they had always done in the past. This was the reason why charges against Apuleius arose. The threat to ascendancy he personified had to be removed, and the best way his enemies could accomplish his downfall, ironically, was to seek recourse to the law of Rome. The conflict in the family history of Apuleius and Pudentilla accordingly was due not solely to a struggle for money, or to demographic accident, or to the exercise of patriarchal authority, but above all to a clash of cultures of the sort Tertullian was later to memorialize in the *De pallio*. The history of Apuleius and Pudentilla and their relatives cannot be separated from its local setting, and in this instance the history is inarguably Romano-African.

Postscript

The suggestion made in this essay on the character of Tripolitanian family life in the imperial period appears to find support from the evidence of certain local burial practices. At Lepcis Magna considerable numbers of tombs have been discovered of an indigenous underground type that owes nothing to Roman influence. The tombs were used by the well-to-do, who over several generations deposited in them urns containing the cremated remains of deceased family members, which were identified with inscriptions written in either Neo-Punic or Latin. Adjacent to the underground tombs of the prosperous were ground-level burials of their social dependants. Altogether the burials have been taken to show the continuation through the high imperial age of an indigenous clannish family form that stands in strong contrast to, and could never be known from, the Roman architectural features of the city. Further, the survival of indigenous African family forms into the late third and fourth centuries has also been detected from the evidence of the long-known monumental tombs at Ghirza, some 250 kilometres southwest of Lepcis in the Libyan pre-desert. These practices make additional contributions to knowledge of the distinctive context in which the events of the *Apology* should be construed and the *Apology* itself read.[29]

4

Animalizing the Slave: The Truth of Fiction

In his discussion of natural slavery in the first book of the *Politics* (1254a17–b39), Aristotle notoriously assimilates human slaves to non-human animals. Natural slaves, Aristotle maintains (1254b16–20), are those who differ from others in the way that the body differs from the soul, or in the way that an animal differs from a human being; and into this category fall 'all whose function is bodily service, and who produce their best when they supply such service.' The point is made more explicit in the argument (1254b20–4) that the capacity to be owned as property and the inability fully to participate in reason are defining characteristics of the natural slave: 'Other animals do not apprehend reason but obey their instincts. Even so there is little divergence in the way they are used; both of them (slaves and tame animals) provide bodily assistance in satisfying essential needs' (1254b24–6). Slaves and animals are not actually equated in Aristotle's views, but the inclination of the slave-owner in classical antiquity, or at least a representative of the slave-owning classes, to associate the slave with the animal is made evident enough. It appears again in Aristotle's later statement (1256b22–6) that the slave was as appropriate a target of hunting as the wild animal.[1]

I say 'inclination' because this mode of thought was far from unusual in the classical world. It is especially noticeable for example in writers on domestic management. When recommending how to instil obedience in slaves, Xenophon (*Oec*. 13.9) states that slaves should be treated in the same way as wild beasts by being given as much food as they want. The elder Cato (*Agr*. 2.7), ordering the farm owner to dispose of everything superfluous as he inspects his estate, lists (*inter alia*) worn-out oxen, inferior cattle and sheep, and old and sickly slaves all in the same breath, as if they constitute a common category. And Varro (*Rust*. 1.17.1), defining the means with which land is worked, distinguishes slaves from animals by virtue of slaves' ability to

speak, but still perceives a common bond between them because like wagons they both fall under the rubric of 'means.' On the subject of the ideal villa and its constituent elements, Columella (*Rust*. 1.6.8) moves easily from the topic of how to accommodate slaves to that of how to accommodate livestock, prescribing, in particular, that 'Cells for the herdsmen and shepherds should be adjacent to their respective charges (*pecora*), so that they may conveniently run out to care for them.' The ease of association between slave and animal, it might be concluded, was a staple aspect of ancient mentality, and one that stretched back to a very early period: the common Greek term for 'slave,' *andrapodon*, 'man-footed creature,' was built on the foundation of a common term for cattle, namely, *tetrapodon*, 'four-footed creature.'[2]

As Aristotle's evidence indicates, the association itself was due above all to the tendency to categorize the slave as human, but animal-like, property. And perhaps nothing illustrates the point more clearly in the Roman evidence for classical slavery than the *Lex Aquilia*, the statute passed at latest by the early third century BC from which all Rome's law of damage to property subsequently evolved. Its first provision reads: 'If anyone shall have unlawfully killed a male or female slave belonging to another or a four-footed animal (*quadrupedem pecudem*), whatever may be the highest value of that in that year, so much money is he to be condemned to give to the owner.' The provision assumes that slaves and animals are commodities that by definition fall under the ownership of an *erus* and that they are comparable commodities. That notion was reaffirmed almost five hundred years later by the jurist Gaius when commenting on the *Lex Aquilia*, still in use in his own day, as, indeed, it was still of interest and meaning to the compilers of the *Digest* in the early sixth century: 'It thus appears,' Gaius stated (*Dig*. 9.2.2.2), 'that the statute treats equally (*exaequat*) our slaves and our four-footed cattle (*quadrupedes*) which are kept in herds, such as sheep, goats, horses, mules, and asses (*asini*).' The same idiom is found in the Edict of the Aediles, which required the seller of beasts of burden (*iumenta*) to disclose any disease or defect in animal merchandise just as it required the seller of a slave to do the same. Failure to disclose provided grounds for cancellation of a sale. Commenting on the regulation that pertained to livestock, Ulpian wrote (*Dig*. 21.1.38.2–3): 'The reason for this edict is the same as that for the return of slaves. And in effect, the same applies as in respect of defects in or diseases of slaves, so that what we have said of them should be transferred to the present context.'[3]

Why was animalizing the slave such a persistent mode of thought in classical antiquity? What is its significance for understanding the history of the relationship between master and slave? These are the questions with which this essay is concerned. But before suggesting a possible way to answer

them, I want to emphasize the importance of looking at the questions within their specific historical and cultural context by briefly comparing and contrasting some evidence of the connection made between slave and animal in later slave societies. It happens that the assimilation of the slave to the beast, particularly the black slave, has been a common phenomenon in the history of slavery at large. Thus, an Arab poet wrote of the tenth-century black slave ruler of Egypt, Abu'l-Misk Kafur, 'I never thought I should live to see the day when a dog would do me evil and be praised into the bargain'; while the New Jersey Quaker David Cooper wrote in 1772: 'The low contempt with which they are generally treated by the whites, lead [*sic*] children from the first dawn of reason, to consider people with a black skin, on a footing with domestic animals, form'd to serve and obey.' Here it is notable that the reference to 'domestic animals' fits well with the references to both tame and domestic animals given by the classical authors I cited earlier. But as both statements imply, an important distinction has to be drawn between the association made between slaves and animals in slave-owning regimes where owners were white and slaves were black, and that made in classical antiquity where slavery was not tied to race and skin colour.[4]

When English adventurers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries first began to encounter West Africans in their homelands, they were forcibly struck by African cultural characteristics and practices very different from their own – differences of colour and religion especially, but also differences in the way Africans dressed, lived in huts, in how they farmed, spoke, went to war, and governed themselves. These aspects of life they regarded as not just radically different from, but essentially inferior to, their own. Africans after all were 'heathens.' Together with the way they were captured, enslaved, and traded, this perception of Africans made the connection with animals easy and swift; and it was facilitated by the entirely fortuitous fact that early penetration of West Africa exposed adventurers for the first time not only to an enslavable indigenous human population but also, and simultaneously, to the higher forms of apes. Many shared characteristics between the two were immediately postulated, and, in particular, sexual union between African and ape was commonly assumed. Such views were long maintained, giving rise to various debates about the place of Africans and their slave descendants in the New World in the Great Chain of Being, the notion, very prevalent in the late eighteenth century, that all life forms could be positioned on a scale rising from lowest to highest. To some, notably Thomas Jefferson, it seemed that Africans were to be classified on a *scala naturae* as creatures standing midway between beasts and human beings like themselves. Proximity to the beast – and in this instance it is the wild beast – thus reinforced and compounded the inferiority of the African

established by the difference of race, which itself provided the basic foundation for the growth and development of slavery systems in the New World.[5]

The origins of the idea of the Great Chain of Being have been found in classical antiquity, in the 'principle of plenitude' evident in the philosophy of Plato and the 'principle of unilinear gradation' in that of Aristotle. But debates about the place to be assigned in a classificatory scheme to African slaves could never be a major concern to classical philosophers, not because African slaves were altogether unknown, but because slavery in antiquity was never racially grounded as it was in the New World. There is little in fact to suggest that racial prejudice of the kind all too familiar from recent and contemporary history reached any serious level in antiquity at all. Classical slavery, it must be remembered, was an equal opportunity condition, available to men, women, and children of every sort and condition. For Greeks and Romans, the association between the slave and the animal was undoubtedly due in part to the way in which both society and the natural world at large were hierarchically ordered: the slave by definition was inferior to the master and so closer to even more inferior forms of life. But the association can have had little to do with racial prejudice – there was no physiological or physiognomical imperative to drive it – but only with the commodification of the slave, the fact that a human being reduced to the status of a slave could be bought and sold, like livestock, as a piece of property. On the other hand, because classical slavery was not closely connected with race, the prospect that anyone at any time might become its victim was far more real than it could ever have been in the slave societies of the New World. A moralist such as Seneca (*Ep*. 47.10) might point this out for rhetorical effect, but as many examples show – Caesar's capture by pirates is sufficient – it was inescapably true.[6]

I

It happens that the ability of the capricious goddess Fortuna to render a man powerless is revealed in the opening pages of Apuleius's *Metamorphoses* in the story of the travelling merchant Socrates, told by Aristomenes, who was reduced to beggary by brigands and a beguiling witch. And the subjection of the novel's main character, Lucius, to fortune's dictates is of course one of the major themes of the work as a whole. As far as I know, there is no ancient source which reveals directly the social impact of the convention of assimilating the slave to the beast; but to the extent that it deals fictively with the transformation of a human being into one of Gaius's types of four-footed animals, the *Metamorphoses* is a work that raises the possibility of understanding something of the process of animalization its story unfolds. In what follows, therefore, I propose to explore the ramifications

of the connection between animal and slave as revealed in Apuleius's account of the adventures of his protagonist Lucius, whose dangerous desire to dabble in magic causes him to be turned into an ass and to endure a series of terrible misfortunes before being restored to human form through the intervention of the goddess Isis. I shall contend that the transformation of Lucius can be taken as a paradigmatic illustration of the animalization of the slave in real life, and as a guide to the meaning of animalization in the master–slave relationship. I shall suggest first that the *Metamorphoses* shows how animalizing the slave served the interests of slave-owners by functioning as a mechanism of control and domination, and second that the novel reveals the limits of how far manipulation of the slave could be taken. The abruptness in the *Metamorphoses* of the transformation of Apuleius's Lucius into a beast of burden might be compared to the suddenness of the transformation which any enslaved captive, such as Caesar, underwent in antiquity. And what I want to argue is that in this and various other respects the *Metamorphoses*, perhaps uniquely in classical literature, captures the essence of the process of enslavement and what that process meant in human terms through the connections it establishes between animal and slave.[7]

The transformation of Lucius occurs towards the end of Book 3 of the work (*Met*. 3.24), by which time his identity has been firmly established. A young man of impeccable character and family pedigree, well educated and well travelled, Lucius is a cultured citizen of Corinth, who by his handsome looks, fine clothing, and modest demeanour communicates to everyone he meets that he belongs to the upper reaches of society. As the story opens, he poses the infamous question of himself, '*Quis ille?*' (*Met*. 1.1: '"Who is this?"'), and critics speculate endlessly on what an answer might be. But at the level of plain storytelling there is no doubt that by the time he becomes an ass the hero of the *Metamorphoses* is a young man, much like Apuleius himself, who belonged to the decurial sector of provincial Roman society, with all that that label implies about social origins, wealth, and education. Like Plutarch, to whom he claims a family connection (*Met*. 2.1), Lucius as a leading citizen of a city that was a Roman colony should be assumed to be a Roman citizen. (The work is set in Greece, against the background of the Roman empire of the second century.)[8]

The asinine form into which he is suddenly changed, however, presents a total contrast: not a change simply from human to animal, but a change from the heights of human physical perfection to the depths of bestial ugliness: hair turns to bristles, skin to hide, fingers and hands become hooves, a tail grows, the face becomes enormous, with mouth distended, nostrils spreading, lips drooping, and ears long and hairy. The only consolation of which Lucius is aware is an increase in the size of his penis.[9]

The description of the metamorphosis is surely meant to be comic, in keeping with the narrator's early announcement of his intention to entertain his reader (*Lector intende: laetaberis* [*Met*. 1.1: 'Give me your ear, reader: you will enjoy yourself.']). But humour quickly gives way to something more disquieting, even disturbing, as the narrator becomes aware that the change from the type of the civic decurion to the archetypal beast of burden is, quite literally, a true *degradation*, a descent from very near the top of a chain of being to very near the bottom. And the fall is one of which the human mind trapped within the body of the beast is very conscious and which induces severe emotional turmoil. For Lucius retains his human mind and personality within the body of the ass, and so almost immediately realizes that he cannot speak or gesture in any normal human way, that he is no longer himself but a dumb animal and a beast of burden. Instinctively (as it were) he thinks of retaliating against or protesting his plight by physically attacking and killing the agent of his misfortune, his lover Photis, the slave of his host Milo; but he is forced to abandon the idea because he knows that his hopes of restoration to human form depend on her. In the stable where his horse is housed, he tries to eat some roses, the antidote that Photis says will restore him to his proper form, but instead he finds himself humiliatingly beaten by his own slave. The slave has become the master and the master the slave. Then Lucius the Ass is dragooned into service by some robbers who attack Milo's house and use him to help carry off the property they steal, beating him frequently in the process. He considers the option of appealing to Caesar – a plainly topical note – but he has no voice with which to speak: he has become an *instrumentum inuocale*; and although another opportunity arises to eat some roses, his fear of being killed by the robbers deters him from taking it. Very quickly, it appears, Lucius has been tamed.[10]

Altogether, therefore, it can be said that in the immediate aftermath of his transformation Lucius undergoes an agonizing crisis of identity. Every facet of the human being that has been carefully revealed in the story so far is stripped away, and Lucius becomes utterly depersonalized as a result, unrecognizable and isolated, a dehumanized outcast. He is fully aware of his fall, finds it shaming, and learns that he must internalize his misfortune and resign himself to it. Is he still really Lucius or just an ass? The question, and the crisis of identity on which it depends, offers in my view a perfect metaphor for the situation of captive slaves, who, while not losing their voices in quite the same manner as Lucius, certainly lost the ability to speak openly and freely, and who, forfeiting identity with freedom, were able to form a new sense of being only in relation to the owners into whose power they had fallen. Varro (*Ling*. 8.9.21) tells how a slave bought at Ephesus might be named by his new master, either after his previous owner, after the region in

which the city was located, or after the city itself. But how did slaves actually respond to the imposition of a new name and a new identity? That is a question difficult to answer, but from the description of Lucius's metamorphosis the function of animalization in destroying identity and replacing it with a sense of deracination is evident enough.[11]

Once the transformation has taken place, much of the remainder of the *Metamorphoses* is taken up with its practical consequences: Lucius's loss of independence and the exploitation of the Ass by a succession of characters into whose ownership he falls. Three rubrics can be set out, summarizing variations on recurring elements suggestive for understanding the process of animalization, all of which link the animal to the slave.

First, stress is continually placed on the fact that Lucius the Ass is a beast of burden, and a beast almost always at work. The Ass labours as a pack animal for the robbers for a considerable interval, but subsequently carries burdens for a sequence of other figures: a cruel slave boy whose daily job it is to gather firewood, a group of herdsmen belonging to the noblewoman Charite who set off to find a new home when their mistress dies, some itinerant Syrian priests who use the Ass to carry, among other things, the image of the goddess they worship (the Dea Syria), a market gardener who transports his produce to town every day, a swaggering soldier who requisitions the Ass for his commanding officer's use, two slave chefs, brothers, who need transportation for their baking equipment. The Ass is also twice set to the drudgery of turning a mill, a place long understood in literature as a suitable site for the punishment of slaves. All of this he finds demeaning and scarcely tolerable, but the Ass is completely unable to control the circumstances which surround him or to free himself from the life of unremitting toil into which he has been plunged. Unceasing physical labour of a servile sort is one immediate consequence of the dehumanization to which animalization has exposed him.[12]

Second, stress is continually placed on the fact that the Ass not only can but almost must suffer physical maltreatment. As with slaves in real life, who could pay in no other way, the Ass is answerable to his owners solely with his body, so that cruel floggings appear with numbing frequency throughout the story. The Ass is beaten for the first time, as already mentioned, by his own slave when he is still at Milo's house (the irony is that even a slave can beat a dumb animal), but afterwards, and always with impunity, by practically everyone he encounters. On one occasion the Ass falls lame from a beating, at other times he suffers truly sadistic treatment, from the cruel boy and the boy's mother, the Syrian priests, and a miller's wife; even the charitable Charite beats him. In turn the Ass has to learn how to deal with habitual, randomly inflicted violence or its threat, including the

barbaric threat of castration, as an elemental part of his new animal existence. Again, he cannot control or prevent it; he can only learn to withstand it. Nor can he do anything to prevent the verbal attacks and abuse which might accompany the physical trials. When the cruel boy falsely accuses the Ass of bestiality and his mother berates him for causing her son's death, loss of voice makes defence against the charges impossible.[13]

Sexual exploitation is a related form of physical abuse to which the powerless Ass, again like the slave in everyday life, is exposed. Not unreasonably, the corrupt Syrian priests imagine that their leader Philebus has bought the Ass for their bestial pleasure: they already have a slave piper, purchased from the block, who doubles as a group *concubinus*, and, adding to their sense of anticipation, the piper welcomes the Ass as his *uicarius*. If in the event anticipation goes unrealized, this is not the case when an oversexed Corinthian noblewoman pays the Ass's keeper to bed him, a bargain in which the Ass again has no say, although on this occasion he becomes a willing victim. Once, however, his owner, the decurion Thiasus, spots the chance to make money by publicly exhibiting him engaged in sex acts – there is nothing to stop him and a depraved female criminal is found to serve as partner – the sense of shame the Ass experiences becomes unendurable, and he bolts from Corinth to Cenchreae.[14]

Third, consider the number of times the Ass, like the slave piper (who might represent any slave in real life), is sold. First by Charite's herdsmen to Philebus; then to a miller by some villagers who take the Ass from the Syrian priests; to the market gardener by the miller's daughter after her father's death; to the two slave brothers by the swaggering soldier; and finally to their owner Thiasus by the slave brothers. Each time, incidentally, the price paid for the piece of property, unrealistically and insultingly low, is indicated. On no occasion is the Ass able to do anything but passively accept the result of the transaction and to bow repeatedly to decisions made for him by others. The contrast with the independence and active pursuit of learning (*doctrina*) by the human Lucius in the early part of the story is obvious but important. As the commodity to which animalization has reduced him, the Ass has altogether lost the individual autonomy of the human being, and his inability to speak with a human voice only emphasizes how impotent, what a non-person, he has become. He cannot protest when he hears that Lucius has been falsely accused of having robbed Milo; nor can he vent his outrage when the Syrian priests bring a young man home with them from the baths for dinner and group sex: no words, only braying sounds, will leave his mouth. He is not the ass of Phaedrus's fable who can voice the wisdom of the suffering servant. The Ass is indeed compelled to accept his powerlessness, but this leads only to confusion and, under extreme

circumstances – the prospect of castration or public sex – the contemplation of suicide. Even pleasure, on the rare occasions it is felt, has to be enjoyed internally and privately, and in silence. The frustrations of impotence become palpable.[15]

The result is that in being transformed from human to beast Lucius the Ass becomes a passive commodity who, or which, can apparently be turned to any purpose his various owners wish, and to whose servitude there is no easily foreseeable end. Animalization converts Lucius to a state of mute acceptance of all that is required once his human identity and independence have been removed, and it seems to give his owners complete control over him with little danger of their will being denied. For the Ass's owners, in other words, Lucius's animalization emerges as a mechanism of empowerment.

II

For many slaves, evidently enough, unremitting labour, harsh physical treatment (including sexual abuse), and arbitrary disposal by sale were staple aspects of life, just as they are for the Ass. Any ancient reader of the *Metamorphoses* therefore might well have thought of the Ass as a slave. Apuleius leaves the matter in no doubt, for his protagonist is identified or identifies himself as a slave or being in a state of servitude several times. As the Ass he is the 'fellow-slave' (*conseruus*) of his own horse and the cruel boy; he enters a state of 'slavery' (*seruitium*) when consigned to the mill or sold to a new owner; and the priest Mithras who presides over his re-formation considers his whole experience as the Ass a period of servitude (*seruitium*). Lucius, moreover, can be condemned for a propensity for pursuing 'servile pleasures' (*seruiles uoluptates*), a notoriously provocative phrase. The truth is that like a real slave Lucius the Ass comes to find himself regarded as non-existent – when humans for example engage in conversation around him – to be living as if in a state of death.[16]

Two passages make the assimilation of the Ass to a slave impossible to avoid. First, the account of his sale to Philebus (*Met*. 8.23–6). Here, the careful inspections the Ass undergoes from potential purchasers and the description the auctioneer gives of his qualities match, and parody, the manner in which slaves were treated on the block, so that the whole episode is bound to have been understood by contemporary readers as a version of a slave sale. Making an obvious servile allusion, the auctioneer jokingly refers to the Ass as a 'Cappadocian' before Philebus takes away what he calls his 'novice servant' (*nouicium famulum*), a phrase which also puns on servile language. The account as a whole is in fact full of servile vocabulary. Livestock for sale were of course disposed of in the same way: *et de sanitate ac noxa solet*

caueri, Varro observes of the sale of an ass (*Rust*. 2.6.3: 'provision is usually made concerning physical condition and injury'), a statement which actual sales documents verify. But that is the point: the sale of an animal and the sale of a slave were indistinct from one another, as the Aedilician Edict proves. Second, the Ass's description of his fellow victims in the second mill in which he works (*Met*. 9.12–13). The workers fall into two pitiful groups: the (human) slaves, filthy, emaciated men who wear nothing but rags, whose bodies are marked by brands and scars, whose feet are shackled; and the other asses who turn the mills, mangy, sickly animals worn out, even deformed, from constant toil and beatings. Again, there is no difference between man and beast, and together they constitute a *familia*. The authenticity of the collocation is confirmed by iconographic sources – the tomb of the baker M. Vergilius Eurysaces in Rome is a notable example – in which the presence of the whip is a common feature.[17]

In the *Metamorphoses* the Ass is in many respects a figure of fun. The reader after all knows throughout the story that the Ass is really Lucius, and that the change from human to animal is essentially a comic fiction. Nonetheless, the Ass is a particularly suitable symbol of servitude given the reputation of the ordinary cheap and common ass in everyday life (Col. *Rust*. 7.1.1: *uilis … uulgarisque asellus*). Varro, Columella, and the elder Pliny all make clear how valued and serviceable the animal was, capable of performing a variety of jobs at relatively little cost to its owner: turning mills, hauling wagons, carrying panniers, pulling a plough. The ass was an important asset to farmers, and also to merchants who traded in commodities such as oil, wine, and grain. It required little upkeep, rarely fell ill, needed little supervision, and could put up with hard labour, hunger, and beatings. Prize specimens from Arcadia in Greece or Reate in Italy commanded high prices, and the quality of the animal would have been something to think about when mule breeding was at issue. Agents of the emperor himself, as other evidence indicates, relied on the animal for transportation when conducting official business. The ass, therefore, was the ideal servant, adaptable, hard working, and compliant, a model in fact of what the slave should be. A graffito from a *paedagogium* on the Palatine accompanying a sketch of an ass turning a mill suggests how the animal popularly connoted routine toil, even to a child: *Labora, aselle, quomodo ego laboraui, et proderit tibi* ('Toil, little ass, as I have toiled; it will be to your advantage'), while a terracotta image of a classroom whose pupils are rows of monkeys shows the schoolmaster as a presumably long-suffering ass. The picture of the Ass in the *Metamorphoses*, enduring constant work, incessant beatings, and also poor food, is very much drawn from the real world, and no ancient reader is likely to have missed the servile associations of the animal whose form

Lucius adopts. To the contemporary interpreter of dreams Artemidorus, the ass was the very symbol of misery and slavery.[18]

It becomes possible consequently to posit that if in the *Metamorphoses* the animalization of Lucius is a literal, fictive phenomenon, the metaphorical animalization of the slave in real life was an empowering device of considerable value to the slave-owner. Lucius's transformation suggests that as a strategy of control and domination, animalization was a means of depriving slaves of their personal identities and of inculcating in them an ethic of shameful non-personhood, a strategy that was perhaps immediately effective at the moment of enslavement when the significance of the shift from freedom to slavery arguably first made itself felt. It offered the prospect of converting human beings to a state of mute and unquestioning docility and obedience, in which there were virtually no limits to the demands of work, punishment, and disposal that might be made of them, and in which slaves' ability to exercise their will and make independent decisions might be completely destroyed. Freedom of movement and reproductive capacity, for example, were two aspects of personhood that translation to the state of the tamed animal took away from slaves; and as noted earlier, even the ordinary human function of speech could be restricted. Animalization also served to sanction and to justify the way masters treated their slaves, in the sense that once slaves were set on the level of beasts all need to cater to their human sensibilities was removed. It did not matter any more what slaves were given to eat, or to wear, what they felt or thought, what human bonds they had formed once their humanity had been negated; masters had only to meet the requirements of sensible proprietorship, as with any other item of livestock (an ass, for example). Moreover, in a slave society where race did not immediately connote and could not compound servile associations, the strategy had perhaps a special importance in supporting the other instruments of control masters deployed to instil in their slaves a psychology of subordination.[19]

Material from later slave societies lends this notion of empowerment a certain plausibility. The American fugitive Harriet Jacobs wrote in her autobiography of the depths to which the slave reduced to the level of the brute might sink: 'Some poor creatures have been so *brutalized* by the lash that they will sneak out of the way to give their masters free access to their wives and daughters'; and she makes clear how a white woman could exploit the brutalized black male for her own sexual satisfaction. She was aware, too, of how the tie between slave and animal might render some slaves positively insensate: 'I know that some are too much *brutalized* by slavery to feel the humiliation of their position.' Another fugitive, Frederick Douglass, wrote of the levelling effects of, and the loss of dignity involved in, putting slaves

up for sale not just in the manner of but together with livestock, when recalling how his first master's property had been assessed upon the master's death; he communicated simultaneously how the tie affected both slaves and their masters: 'We were all ranked together at the valuation. Men and women, old and young, married and single, were ranked with horses, sheep, and swine. There were horses and men, cattle and women, pigs and children, all holding the same rank in the scale of being, and were all subjected to the same narrow examination. Silvery-headed age and sprightly youth, maids and matrons, had to undergo the same delicate inspection. At this moment, I saw more clearly than ever the brutalizing effects of slavery upon both slave and slaveholder.' The point is further illustrated by a report written in 1843 by H. Augustus Cowper, British consul in Recife, Brazil, on slave conditions in the province of Pernambuco. Although aware that the treatment of slaves varied from place to place and that some owners were relatively benign, Cowper observed that in most of its victims slavery destroyed all power of reason and intellect, and that this loss enabled them, by a sort of transference of power, to tolerate the physical hardships and degradations of slavery in a way that human beings normally could not. There were other burdens to bear: no civic or legal rights of any kind, and no natural rights, in matters of sex, for example. Cowper concluded that 'the endeavour of the master is to suppress alike the intellect, the passions, and the senses of these poor creatures, and the laws aid them in transforming the African man into the American beast.' Seneca (*Ep*. 47.5), lamenting his peers' abuse of their slaves as if they were not men (*homines*) but beasts of burden (*iumenta*), would have understood. Sympathetic to the slaves but undeniably authentic, Cowper's account actualizes the figurative account of Apuleius and makes unmistakable the controlling consequence of animalizing the slave.[20]

III

According to the elder Pliny (*HN* 8.169), asses in antiquity needed to be quartered in wide stalls because of their habit of kicking while asleep. If an ass such as the single specimen with which Apuleius in the *Apology* (23.6) says his Tripolitanian kinsman Sicinius Aemilianus worked his farm in Zarath were to have kicked, or perhaps bolted, while turning a mill or carrying a load, the driver always had the option of beating the animal into submission. And the ass was almost proverbial in antiquity for the physical abuse to which it was subjected. As I have noted, the Ass in the *Metamorphoses* endures innumerable beatings, among other misfortunes, sometimes stoically. But from the earliest moments of the transformation his ability to 'kick' not in sleep but while awake is brought out in the way he almost kills

the gardener who gives him one of his earliest floggings. Indeed, his ability to respond to the suddenly imposed state of servitude is evident in the debate he immediately has with himself whether to assault and murder Photis. It quickly emerges, therefore, that Apuleius's Ass is not an utterly passive being, and on many occasions indeed he takes action, or at least contemplates action, to alleviate his sufferings. Apart from trying to appeal for help to the emperor, he can form a plan to stand rooted to the ground in the hope that the robbers will abandon him, or run away from their cave, after careful deliberation about a safe destination, when he hears of their plan to kill him. He twice considers suicide, as already seen, can shower dung on the cruel boy's mother when she tortures him with a firebrand, or hide in the middle of the pack of the herdsmen's baggage animals when he fears being attacked by wolves. He runs away when threatened with execution by a slave cook, bolts again when attacked by servants who believe he is rabid, pretends not to know how to turn a mill in order to avoid work (only to be beaten into compliance). He takes revenge on a cruel woman by revealing her adultery to her husband, pilfers food from his owners the chef and the pastry cook, runs away once more when he cannot allow himself to appear in the public sex show. All in all, when opportunity permits, the Ass devises whatever tricks (*dola*) and schemes (*fraudes*) he can to extricate himself from the torments and indignities of being a beast of burden, the simple art of dissembling included.[21]

All these actions depend on Lucius's retention of his human mind in his animal body and his ability to respond to servitude, sometimes successfully, sometimes not, by exercising his human will. In the first instance this is no more than a conceit necessary for the telling of Apuleius's story. But it presents the Ass with a predicament – to act or not to act – that seems to me to correspond closely to the plight of slaves, and especially newly captive slaves, who retained human intelligence and emotion in bodies no longer their own, and whose freedom to act on the impulse of intelligence and emotion was threatened with near extinction by submission to a superior force. Even the comfort of sleep, the *Metamorphoses* suggests, was not to be taken for granted. Under such circumstances, the human responses available, as the history of both ancient and modern slavery shows, have covered a spectrum of options, ranging from total accommodation to submission at one extreme, to outright revolt against oppression at the other. In the *Metamorphoses* the behaviour of the Ass covers a comparable range. At times he is acquiescent when acquiescence is the more sensible course, learning from the fate of his peers, even rejecting the chance of freedom if liberty should seem to lead to death; at others, as the catalogue I have just given indicates, when the pressures and tribulations of servitude can no longer be borne, he resists.[22]

The story of Lucius, then, communicates the reality that slave-owners have always had to face, that slaves cannot all be reduced to a condition of total subservience and compliance all the time, that the human will cannot always be completely suppressed. Reducing the slave to the level of the domesticated animal remained in the last analysis only a slave owner's aspiration, no matter what stress men such as Cicero (*Off*. 2.24) placed on using force to maintain the slave's subjection, and it remains the case that throughout antiquity many slaves drew upon their human capacity in order to defy their owners. The relationship between the master and the slave, it follows, could never be as one-sided as that between the master and his livestock (if 'relationship' is the right word to use). Like Lucius the Ass, and like the slave, a real ass could be enticed to work by the prospect of a reward (becoming a breeder of mules) and be treated kindly afterwards. It could also be beaten, stubbornly refuse to carry its load, even run away. But it could not reflect on the misfortunes of Fortune and lament the fall to quadruped state – the lowest condition of all that bent the animal to the ground, in contrast to the erect posture of a man – as if conscious of its liability under the *Lex Aquilia*; it could not deliberate whether to take its own life or think in terms of taking revenge against its owner; it could not feel the shame of being exhibited as a public spectacle, or the shame of subservience. These were human responses, which lead in the story to actions that in turn require further responses from the Ass's various owners. The autonomy of Lucius is in fact never utterly destroyed by his animal form but only diminished, and as long as a vestige of agency remains, his owners have to react accordingly, especially because of his value as a commodity to them. Here again the correspondence with the real world of slaves and masters seems to me compelling, because the forms of behaviour the Ass adopts to express his resistance – physical assaults, running away, deceit and trickery – have much in common with those recorded of real slaves in the everyday life of classical antiquity. Because they were valued as commodities, slaves were never altogether powerless, and so the relationship with the owner was one which had to be continually defined, adjusted, and redefined, as their response to slavery manifested itself from moment to moment.[23]

Was it Apuleius's intention to reveal the historical truth that the slave-owner could never count on converting the slave into a tamed animal? That is a question impossible to answer. Important critical studies have shown that the *Metamorphoses* is, in its own right, a complex work in which the search for meaning is difficult, if not illusory. On one highly influential view the work can apparently mean anything the reader wants it to mean because nothing is 'authorized' by its author. On another, the meaning lies in recognizing that the basis of the *Metamorphoses* is a narrative of conversion

that chronicles Lucius's fall from grace and subsequent redemption. On yet another, it lies in seeing the parallel between Lucius's journey towards self-discovery and the creation of a new form of literature. New interpretations emerge all the time. The choice is wide open, and it may be that the full complexity of the work is still to be revealed, even if the fundamental pattern of Lucius's progression from guilt to punishment to redemption to blessedness, which implies a strong authorial interest in personal spirituality, is largely uncontroversial. Against this background, however, and given the perennial danger of ascribing intent to any author of fiction, I hesitate to speculate on Apuleius's object in composing the *Metamorphoses*. I think it plausible all the same that the theme of animalization that I have outlined is an expression, perhaps unconscious for the most part, of a wider social issue, namely, the problematic human relationship between master and slave, that to judge from surviving classical literature was never faced squarely, but that in ordinary life was always in the forefront of slave-owners' minds.[24]

Slaves at least are ubiquitous in the novel, as they were in classical life and culture at large. The wealthy have their domestic entourages to cater to their every need, and rural slaves to work their landed estates and mills. Lucius himself has a slave accompanying him on his travels, and even the niggardly Milo cannot do without Photis. Moreover, the treatment and behaviour of the Ass are consistent with the treatment and behaviour of the story's other slave characters. In the way that the Ass is repeatedly and capriciously tortured, so an adulterous steward is executed by his owner in a wonderfully grisly manner: the errant slave, covered in honey, is tied to a fig tree, and then slowly eaten to death, right down to the bones, by the ants that nest inside the tree trunk. As the Ass becomes a fugitive, so Charite's herdsmen, alarmed by the news of their mistress's death and afraid of what a new owner might have in store for them, flee en masse from their homes, taking their wives, children, and all they can carry on their pack animals in search of a more secure place in which to live. And as the Ass in the depths of desperation thinks of suicide, so a terrified cook prepares to hang himself when faced with his master's demand to serve for dinner a stag, given as a special gift, that a dog has stolen. These incidents are fabrications, but they reflect what was taken as normative when the *Metamorphoses*, an 'adventure novel of everyday life,' as it has been called, was written. Slaves in antiquity did commit suicide and run away in response to the rigours of servitude. And slaves were sadistically punished by their owners: recollection of Vedius Pollio, who incidentally once had an interest in the wild asses of central Asia Minor, is enough to make the point and to validate Apuleius's at first blush preposterous story of death by ants. With its record of acts of crude emasculation, injecting pepper vinegar into women's vaginas, and

boiling alive in a sugar boiler, the report of H.A. Cowper mentioned earlier is a reminder that human ingenuity in inflicting forms of punishment upon slaves has been limitless.[25]

A tendency in modern criticism of the *Metamorphoses* to regard the work as if it exists in a hermeneutic vacuum is striking. Like any other work of literature, however, the *Metamorphoses* is first and foremost a cultural artefact, the product of an author who can be located in time and place. It is a work therefore of historical significance, and a presumably recoverable significance. Its date of composition is unknown and unknowable, and as has been noted its plot is not original. The story was adapted from a Greek precursor, and while critics agree that there are many portions of the *Metamorphoses* which are Apuleius's own creation, the elements of hard labour, beating, and disposal of the Ass by sale are aspects of the basic story Apuleius took over, as the surviving epitome of the Greek original, the *Onos* attributed to Lucian, shows. Nonetheless, whatever Apuleius's debt to the earlier, though perhaps not much earlier, Greek version, it seems that just as his work clearly mirrors the political, administrative, and economic structures of the Roman world of the mid-second century, so it conveys a sense of contemporary social structures and general social assumptions. The story of the Ass is set in a historically recognizable world and a world, it must follow, that is drawn to a considerable extent from Apuleius's own experience.[26]

Apuleius came from the relatively obscure Romano-African city of Madauros. But he was of decurial background, and privileged enough in his early life to travel to Carthage, Athens, and Rome in order to acquire the literary and philosophical education that eventually propelled him to distinction. Consequently he can be presumed to have fully absorbed the idioms of the slave-owning classes by the time he reached maturity. He himself was a slave-owner: when he arrived in the Tripolitanian city of Oea circa 156, en route to Alexandria where he intended to study further, he was travelling with at least one slave attendant, and the enemies he made in Oea could later claim that he had manumitted three others in a single day, as if there were something sinister to the matter. His marriage in Oea to the wealthy widow Aemilia Pudentilla joined him to a slave-owner on the grand scale, a woman who was able on one occasion to transfer control of four hundred of her slaves to her sons from a previous marriage.[27]

Oea and its companion cities on the Tripolitanian coast, Lepcis Magna and Sabratha, were important centres of a trade that brought black slaves along desert passages from sub-Saharan Africa to the shores of the Mediterranean. The Garamantes, an intractable people with whom Rome never seems to have achieved stable relations, were its essential intermediaries. Conceivably the trade benefited Pudentilla and Apuleius. It is reflected at least both in

the occasional literary source such as an epigram from Hadrumentum that suggests the shock that the sight of a black slave could produce locally, and in the mosaics and other objects of art with which members of the Romano-African elite like Apuleius and Pudentilla decorated their houses and villas – mosaics showing camel-drivers or stoker-slaves at bathhouses, and objects such as statuettes of captives, an image of perpetual appeal to Romans. Its extent is difficult to determine, but the trade seems to have long outlived Roman rule and to have survived, even flourished, along the same oasis routes well into the nineteenth century. During the years he spent in Tripolitania, Apuleius can hardly have been unaware of it, any more than he can have been unaware of the general presence of slavery all around him. There were even fourteen slave witnesses at the trial he underwent at Sabratha when accused of having practised magic. Nor can he have failed to know the importance in ordinary daily life of the ass – still highly visible as a beast of burden on the coastal plain of Tripolitania today – as his denigrating comment on the farmer of Zarath reveals.[28]

IV

The story of Lucius's metamorphosis is the story of a man temporarily living in the body of an ass. But it is also a story of a fall into and eventual rescue from slavery. Its special significance for historians of slavery is that it allows the process of animalization, a common aspect of the relationship between master and slave in classical society, to be seen, and its immediate consequences to be understood, in a remarkably graphic manner. To animalize the slave was to project ugliness, always a mark of inferiority, onto a human victim for whom a condition of subservience others had determined; and it was to ostracize the slave from free society by denying the slave any shred of personal identity or human capacity. To assimilate the slave to a lower life form was to assert an incontestable domination of the slave, to adopt a strategy of total commodification physically and of total humiliation psychologically. The functional value of the strategy for slave-owners is self-evident: together with the rewards and punishments of the kind Lucius comes to know after his fall, animalization was a mechanism by which slave-owners in antiquity sought to control and manage their slaves, and as with other mechanisms it was apparently successful enough to be maintained over an enormous period of time. But the *Metamorphoses* also shows that animalization could no more guarantee the owner success in the management of his slave property than any other means of control; and it reveals what the experienced owner feared all along, that if the demands of servitude were pressed to an unbearable limit the response of resistance might always

present itself. The humanity of the slave, that is to say, could never be altogether eradicated. Offering truly novel evidence for classical slavery, the *Metamorphoses* is a cautionary tale which compels its reader to acknowledge that in any slave society, and particularly perhaps in a non-racial slave society, the slave who took the risk of running away, as the Ass finally ran from Corinth to Cenchreae, might always stand a chance of reclaiming liberty and, with liberty, a once lost identity. For it was in resistance that the key to the slave's recovery of personhood lay. Harriet Jacobs knew that slaves could easily think of themselves as the tamed animals their masters wanted them to become: dogs, horses, cattle, pigs; but she also knew that what she tellingly called the 'wild beast of Slavery' was a beast that could be overcome if the 'tamed' slave grasped the chance to become free, to draw, as she did, on the inner reserves of an untamed animal such as the tiger and to flourish under freedom. Apuleius conveys to his reader the knowledge that before every slave in his world there was always the promise of a beautiful, gleaming rose to inspire hope.[29]

The vast chronological duration of classical slavery cannot to my mind be overemphasized. Of a later age the suggestion has been made that the impossibility of fully bestializing the slave 'provided the substance for a revolution in moral perception' from which the abolition of slavery was eventually to follow. The substance of that revolution, 'a recognition that slaves could become masters or masters slaves,' was equally well known to classical antiquity and finds one expression in Apuleius's story of a slave-owner who himself becomes a slave. Yet never in the ancient world did this knowledge stimulate any comparable impetus to change. While it may be true, therefore, to believe that the slave's essential humanity presented classical society, as later slave societies, with a practical problem, it is a more fundamental issue that for a thousand years and more slavery never produced any serious moral crisis in the classical world at all.[30]

Endnote

Mithras speaks: *Nec tibi natales ac ne dignitas quidem, uel ipsa, qua flores, usquam doctrina profuit, sed lubrico uirentis aetatulae ad seruiles delapsus uoluptates curiositatis inprosperae sinistrum praemium reportasti* (*Met.* 11.15: '"Neither your birth, nor yet your rank, nor even your pre-eminent learning were of the slightest help to you, but in the unsteadiness of your green youth you lowered yourself to servile pleasures and reaped a bitter reward for your ill-starred curiosity."').

The phrase *seruiles uoluptates* draws a connection between Lucius (not Lucius the Ass) and slavery. In the ordinary logic of the story it can refer

only to his adventures with Photis, from which his ordeal as the Ass results. That is, adventures in sex and magic. Critics have nuanced the fact, variously emphasizing one element over the other. A link is often made with *Met*. 3.19, where Lucius uses the language of slavery to describe his infatuation with Photis: *in seruilem modum addictum atque mancipatum teneas uolentem* ('"You … have absolutely made a slave and chattel of me – and I love it"'). Photis herself is a slave. It can be said therefore that Lucius is metaphorically 'enslaved' by Photis, or by his desire for her. It is unlikely, however, that the reader of *Met*. 11.15 will immediately and automatically recollect the precise vocabulary of *Met*. 3.19; and because the adjective *seruilis* means 'belonging to or appropriate to a slave,' the phrase *seruiles uoluptates* cannot obviously mean the sexual enjoyment of a slave woman in a narrow sense, with specific reference to the slave Photis. It is difficult consequently to understand what it means to interpret 'slavish pleasures' as 'sexual obsession' or 'sexual slavery,' a type, that is, of 'slavish sensuality' (Walsh 1970: 177); to see how 'slavish pleasures' can be construed to mean servitude to pleasure (Sandy 1974: 234–4) or how *in seruilem modum* at *Met*. 3.19 can be taken as an 'obvious reference to "slavish pleasure"' (Penwill 1975: 70); and it is extremely difficult to believe that the phrase picks up an elaborate economic metaphor introduced by *mutuo nexu* ('an interwoven knot' [Hanson]) at *Met*. 1.1 (Winkler 1985: 188–91). Sex and magic were not by definition in antiquity the exclusive province of slaves, and slavery was not a condition normally associated with pleasure. So why can sex and magic be called 'slavish' or 'slave-like' or 'appropriate to slaves'?

Through Mithras Apuleius projects onto slaves the idea of pleasure, assuming that the delights of sex and magic will somehow be recognized as servile by his readership. In what other context are pleasurable activities attributed to slaves? A key passage is Col. *Rust*. 1.8.1–2: *Igitur praemoneo ne uilicum ex eo genere seruorum, qui corpore placuerunt, instituamus, ne ex eo quidem ordine, qui urbanas ac delicatas artes exercuerit. Socors et somniculosum genus id mancipiorum, otiis, campo, circo, theatris, aleae, popinae, lupanaribus consuetum, numquam non easdem ineptias somniat* ('So my advice at the start is not to appoint an overseer from that sort of slaves who are physically attractive, and certainly not from that class which has busied itself with the voluptuous occupations of the city. This lazy and sleepy-headed class of servants, accustomed to idling, to the Campus, the Circus, and the theatres, to gambling, to cookshops, to brothels, never ceases to dream of these follies'). Here the ability of slaves to enjoy a variety of amusements is understood, but the passage, clearly moralistic, indicates strong disapproval: slaves who engage in the forms of pleasure listed are

irresponsible and unsuitable for elevated positions in the hierarchy of slave labour. In other words they are bad slaves.

Lucius's birth (*natales*), social standing (*dignitas*), and learning (*doctrina*) fit him for serious concerns – the concerns of the decurial order. He is not supposed to devote himself to frivolity. But he does and in so doing behaves like a stereotypically bad slave. Sex and magic are 'servile' pleasures for Lucius consequently because they represent a lack of responsibility on his part, a failure to live up to expectation comparable to the failure of slaves who waste time at entertainments instead of doing their jobs. In the absence of slave testimony, what slaves really regarded as pleasure cannot be known. Only slave-owners branded and condemned behaviour as 'slavish.'

5

Fictive Families: Family and Household in Apuleius's *Metamorphoses*

The line separating the historian from the novelist becomes faint; it is principally in their intentions that they differ. The novelist aims at a lifelike and coherent plausibility to illustrate universal aspects of human nature; for the historian plausibility is a tool by which he seeks to find what actually happened.

P.A. Brunt, *The Fall of the Roman Republic*

To begin, a description of a wealthy Roman family. Its head is a husband and father who owns urban property and estates in the country, together with many slaves who serve as domestics and farm workers. He and his wife belong to an extensive circle of relatives, *cognati* and *affines*, and their house in the city is full of *uernae* and *alumni*. It is also used to receiving clients. The husband and wife have a virgin daughter who is sought in marriage by two suitors, and it is they who decide which one she will marry. A rich man from a neighbouring city who brings gifts to further his cause they reject, deeming his character unsuitable; instead they choose their daughter's cousin, a young man who has grown up with the daughter in their own household and who is just three years older. A mutual affection between the two is recognized. The couple are formally betrothed, and in due course their union, a marriage *cum manu*, is celebrated. Almost at once, however, the new bride finds herself widowed when her cousin-husband is killed in a hunting accident. Then, making the decision herself, she agrees to marry the suitor her parents had originally rejected, on condition that the required mourning period for her first husband, a year, is properly observed (and that their compact is kept secret meantime). This arrangement, however, is sadly brought to nothing by the sudden deaths of both the young woman and the suitor, and so the parents are left childless and the prospects of the grandchildren the mother, in particular, had anticipated, are completely destroyed. The future of the family is consequently thrown into jeopardy.

This is a fairly full account of a Roman family's history. But it is not comprehensive, and in this respect it is typical of all Roman family case histories, which are never more than partially or episodically known, even in the best examples such as that of Cicero's family. The material available to historians wishing to reconstitute Roman family life is by definition severely defective. Nonetheless, in this description any number of features historians have come to regard as characteristic of the lives of elite Roman families can be recognized: the way in which related children who were not siblings might be raised together in one household, the way in which parents are assumed to have responsibility for arranging a child's, especially a daughter's, first marriage, the importance to the family of character in the selection of a husband and of sexual innocence when a woman first marries, the rituals of courtship, the custom of betrothal and the formality of a *iustum matrimonium*, the reality of early widowhood and a woman's relative independence in the choice of a second partner, the hopes invested in marriage for descendants and family continuity, and, above all, the utter unpredictability of the life course, which through untimely death could quickly doom a family to extinction. It would be easy, therefore, to think of this family as a senatorial family from the central period of Rome's history.[1]

Yet this is not the case. The family is not a historical family at all but a family from Apuleius's *Metamorphoses*, the story of the reckless Lucius and his transforming pursuit of magic. It is the family indeed of Charite, the young woman who enters the story when she is abducted and held hostage by the brigands to whom at a certain stage of his adventures, Lucius, now Lucius the Ass, belongs (*Met*. 4.23–4, 26–7; 7.13–15; 8.1–14). It was misleading therefore to call this family a Roman family, and not only because its history comes from a fictional source: Apuleius's story is set in Greece, and Charite's family is if anything a Greek family. In this essay, however, I suggest that the *Metamorphoses*, although a fictional source, contains considerable information about Roman family life in the high imperial age that captures historical experience. I first describe some of the relevant material, and then contend that the *Metamorphoses* is a uniquely important source for historians of the Roman family. I assume that a fictional source may well reflect the historical context in which it was written, despite, as here, the elements of fantasy that might obtrude.

I

The novel displays a wide range of family forms and household configurations (the two are not synonymous), and expresses a number of assumptions about what is normative in family life.

The Familial Universe

At the top of society, there are various decurial families, comparable to that of Charite, such as the family in whose household the Ass finds himself towards the end of his long ordeal (*Met*. 10.1–12). Like Charite's father, the decurion in this case is a wealthy owner of landed estates and slaves, and he has a wife and two sons, the younger of whom is precisely twelve years old. None of the family members has a name. The sons are, it happens, half-brothers, the product of two marriages. Their father's wife is his second wife, whom he married after his first wife's death. The current wife is much younger than her husband. In their story she becomes sexually attracted to her adult stepson, and with the help of a wicked slave sets in motion a dastardly plot to seduce him. Her scheme misfires, however, and her advances are rejected. She decides therefore to murder the young man, only to find her own son accidentally killed by the poison she has prepared for his brother. To save herself, the wife falsely accuses the older son of both killing his younger brother and making adulterous overtures to her. The wretched husband, who is hopelessly devoted to his wife, anticipates the loss of both sons, for the penalty the older child must pay is surely death. The older son is put on trial, but the truth is eventually revealed through the good graces of the doctor, also a decurion, who had made available the poison. Suspecting foul play, the doctor had provided the woman not with poison but a sleeping-draught. So the younger son is restored to life, the innocence of the older son is revealed, the wicked slave is executed, and the horrible wife is sent into exile.

At a lower social level, there are families of a type seen less frequently in most sources than elite families. One example is the three-generational family of Socrates of Aegium, a travelling merchant who, returning from a profitable journey to Macedonia, is first robbed by bandits and then reduced to beggary by a seductive innkeeper, a witch no less, at Hypata in Thessaly (*Met*. 1.5–8). He is met there by a fellow citizen, another itinerant merchant named Aristomenes, who tells him that after a nine months' absence from his home Socrates has been given up for dead. Socrates' wife, grief-stricken, has conducted his funeral, guardians (*tutores*) have been appointed for his children by a Roman official (the *iuridicus prouincialis*), and his wife's parents are now urging her to find a new husband. A second example is the much smaller family of an anonymous day labourer, an *operarius* who lives with his wife in no more than a tiny hut (*cellula; Met*. 9.5–7); the family, that is, contains just two members. The couple are miserably poor – she spins wool day and night to help make ends meet – and own hardly anything other than a storage jar large enough to conceal the wife's lover. Comparable

couples elsewhere in the novel are a market gardener and his wife (*Met*. 4.3), and a fuller and his wife (*Met*. 9.24–5). There is also another doctor and his wife, the doctor this time not a decurion (*Met*. 10.28).

At the bottom of the social scale there are slave families, both rural and urban. The Ass tells of one slave family in a country village that met with tragedy (*Met*. 8.22). The husband was a farm bailiff who managed a farm, supervised the other slaves who worked there, and kept the estate's accounts. His wife was a fellow slave, and they had a newborn child. The husband, however, became involved with a free woman who lived off the estate. So in a burst of jealousy his wife wrecked her husband's accounts, destroyed the contents of a barn for which he was responsible, and then killed her baby before taking her own life. When he learned what had happened, the slave's owner cruelly tortured the faithless husband until he too was dead. Another slave family appears in the urban household of a leading provincial citizen where the Ass finds himself while in the service of some priests of the Syrian goddess (*Met*. 8.31). The husband is a cook, his wife a fellow slave, and they too have a child, a son. This family also has a brush with tragedy when a choice piece of meat meant for the master's dinner is stolen by a dog and the cook, terrified of incurring his master's anger, prepares to kill himself. Disaster is averted, however, when his loyal wife has the inspired idea of killing the Ass in order to replace the lost meat.

The Household Universe

The most impressive households in the *Metamorphoses* are those of provincial aristocrats. The household of Charite's father is a prime example, but there are other comparable households in the novel in which members of the elite are shown as wealthy property owners, often with sizeable complements of slaves. Spouses and children, however, may not always be brought to the fore. In one case (*Met*. 9.33–9) a rich slave-owning *paterfamilias* appears no longer to have a wife at all, but he does have three adult sons who seem to be living with him, all as yet unmarried as far as can be told. In another, a rich young landowner who threatens to steal the holdings of a poor neighbour is a man of noble lineage with many slaves at his disposal, but no immediate relatives are associated with him (*Met*. 9.35–8). The household of Lucius's aunt Byrrhena is especially magnificent (*Met*. 2.2–4, 19–20). Her house in Hypata has an atrium full of wonderful statuary and a dining room spacious enough to entertain a large number of guests, and any number of domestic servants to wait upon them. But Byrrhena, although married, never identifies her husband nor does she say whether she has any children.

Notably she does inform Lucius that she and Lucius's mother had been raised together, had shared the same nurse and grown up as sisters, and that she had helped raise Lucius himself as a child. (Similarly, in the mythical story of Psyche and Cupid, which appears midway through the novel, Psyche's sisters presume that they will help rear her baby once the child is born [*Met*. 5.14].) The impression of communal child-rearing Byrrhena conveys is the same therefore as that already seen in Charite's household. Wealthy provincials, however, do not always live in large households. The decurion and moneylender Chryseros of Thebes lives all by himself in a hovel (*gurgustiolum*), concealing his cash to avoid the demands of civic responsibility (*Met*. 4.9–10), while Milo of Hypata, another niggardly moneylender and Lucius's host at the beginning of the story, also inhabits a *gurgustiolum* – a small, ill-furnished lodging, apparently, though it contains at least two *cubicula*, two storerooms, a room for eating, a space for cooking, and a stable (*Met*. 1.21–3; 3.22–8). The only other inhabitants of this residence are Milo's wife Pamphile and their one slave, Photis.

At a much lower level are the households of the free but less privileged. The tiny shack of the poor day labourer and his wife has already been noticed (*Met*. 9.5–7). But there is also a second, impoverished, market gardener who lives alone in a cottage (*casula; Met*. 9.32), while an old woman of Thebes who is robbed while sleeping in the upper-storey *cubiculum* of her little house (*turguriolum*) is also a solitary, though she has rich neighbours nearby (*Met*. 4.12). In contrast, a miller is prosperous enough to own some slaves to work his mill; he and his monotheistic wife are the neighbours of the fuller and the fuller's wife (*Met*. 9.10–17, 22).

Slaves in the *Metamorphoses* enjoy a variety of living arrangements, and in a sense constitute households within households. A pastry cook and a chef who belong to the rich Thiasus of Corinth are brothers, and eat and sleep in a cell (*cellula*) that is presumably small but large enough to accommodate the Ass as well at one point of his story (*Met*. 10.13). The town house of Democharis of Plataea, another wealthy decurion, also has cells (*cellae*) for the large retinue of slaves he maintains (*Met*. 4.18). In Milo's house, by contrast, Lucius's slaves have to sleep on the floor outside his room (*Met*. 2.15), though this is obviously a temporary arrangement and Photis seems normally to have a room to herself. In the country, the herdsmen of Charite's family live with their wives and children in makeshift cottages (*casae*), forming as a result of the kind of work they do a clan-like community rather than a sequence of sharply defined nuclear families. When an emergency intervenes, they abandon their homes *en masse* under the leadership of the chief herdsman and flee together in search of a new place in which to continue to live as a group (*Met*. 7.15, 17–28; 8.15–23).

Family Norms

When Lucius first meets his host Milo, the moneylender enquires of a mutual friend in Corinth, '"*Quam salue agit," inquit "Demeas noster? quid uxor? quid liberi? quid uernaculi?*"' (*Met*. 1.26; '"Now," he asked, "how is my friend Demeas? And his wife? And the children? And the servants?"'). The combination of parents, children, and home-born slaves might be taken to represent the ideal urban household as conceived by a man like Milo, or so the storyteller, and Apuleius's reader, might assume. But what precisely is the character of family life Apuleius presents as normative in the *Metamorphoses*? Three aspects of family behaviour can be considered.

1. *Marriage*. The selection of a marriage partner in the world of the *Metamorphoses* is not a matter of individual will but a corporate family affair, at least in the case of a first marriage. The parental decision made for Charite illustrates this for elite society, despite the affection Charite and her cousin, whose name is Tlepolemus, share; and from an intricate tale the Ass tells about a woman condemned to the beasts who is to appear with him in a live sex-show, the example can be added of an unnamed upper-class brother who arranges to marry his sister to a friend and gives her a dowry from his own resources (*Met*. 10.23). At the level of society represented by the merchant Socrates, the wider family is also involved in encouraging a widow to take a new husband, no matter what the woman's personal inclination (*Met*. 1.5–6; there is something of a stigma to being a widow; *Met*. 5.30), the prospect of union bringing joy to the whole family (*Met*. 1.6). Even in the story of Psyche and Cupid, a father is assumed to have a special responsibility for securing a husband for his daughter (*Met*. 4.32), and it is important in his calculations that marriage be between social equals: status dissonance in marriage is a recipe for family dissension and might lead to questions about the very legitimacy of the union (*Met*. 5.24; 6.9, 23). It is appropriate that a decurion's wife should be a woman of good birth and great beauty: *uxorem generosam et eximia formositate praeditam* (*Met*. 9.17).

The ideal marital relationship in the *Metamorphoses* is one of harmony between husband and wife, as the miller's (ironic) words to his wife's lover make clear, *Nam et ipse semper cum mea coniuge tam concorditer uixi ut ex secta prudentium eadem nobis ambobus placerent* (*Met*. 9.27; 'I've always lived so harmoniously with my wife that, as the wise recommend, our views on everything have always coincided'). There should be *fides* on both sides (*Met*. 5.13, 23), and ideally again marriage is to last for ever (*Met*. 6.23). The proper nature of marital affection, furthermore, is symbolized by the love (*sanctae caritatis adfectione, Met*. 4.26; 'chaste affection') shared by Charite and Tlepolemus: not a passionate love, which is a destructive

force threatening to marriage, but something more restrained, a love better represented by Venus than by Cupid (*Met*. 4.30; 6.23; 5.28). Indeed, it is dangerous to love too much, as both the story of the wicked stepmother mentioned earlier shows and the obsessive passion felt for Charite by her original suitor Thrasyllus (*Met*. 8.2–3). Yet there is no absence of sexual energy in the world of the *Metamorphoses*, and at every social level adulterous affairs seem to be the almost predictable sequel to marriage, no matter what the token reproaches they might elicit (cf. *Met*. 1.8). Not only might an upper-class wife, and a respectable recent widow, be libidinous, but also a miller's wife, a fuller's wife, a moneylender's wife: their lovers are everywhere (*Met*. 2.27; 9.22, 24; 2.5). And there is no question of women being the worse offenders: married men such as Socrates and the slave *uilicus* are just as culpable (*Met*. 1.7; 8.22). It is significant that Lucius is conscious of the obligation to respect his host Milo and not to sleep with Milo's wife Pamphile, but his host's maidservant is another matter altogether (*Met*. 2.6).

2. *Children*. Children in the *Metamorphoses* are the anticipated and highly valued fruits of marriage, by definition a source of delight (*Met*. 5.28). Pregnancy is a cause of joy for the whole family (*Met*. 5.14), and new arrivals can be eagerly awaited by prospective grandparents (*Met*. 4.26). If bereft of a father, as seems to be the case in Socrates' family, children are to be given the protection of *tutores*, as Roman law required (*Met*. 1.6), or else the satisfaction of swift summary justice if foul play appears to have caused a parent's death (*Met*. 3.8). At times, however, a father might have to make a difficult decision about whether to raise all the children born to him, and a man is found instructing his pregnant wife to kill the child she bears if the child turns out to be a girl (*Met*. 10.23). In turn, a married woman has to contend with pregnancies and deliveries over a long interval of time, and other serious problems might arise: she might have reason for instance to fear incest between a son and a sister of whose true identity the son knows nothing (*Met*. 10.24).

Among the best families early child care lies in the hands of child-minding slaves, who are readily available: Byrrhena and Lucius's mother, recall, had shared the same nurse (*Met*. 2.3); a nurse still chaperones the widowed Charite (*Met*. 8.10); and the half-brothers almost destroyed by the cruel stepmother have respectively an *educator* and a *paedagogus*, the latter of whom is seen in his classic role of escorting a boy to and from school (*Met*. 10.4, 5). In slave families children have to learn to work at an early age: thus, a boy in the community of herdsmen on Charite's rural estates is given the job of taking the Ass every day to gather firewood from a mountainside (*Met*. 7.17). He treats the Ass cruelly, but contributes to his family's well-being as elite sons do to theirs, and when he dies the grief of his slave parents

is painfully intense (*Met*. 7.26–7). The dependence of the older generation on the younger operates at all social levels.

The continuing solidarity of the family and the support it offers its members are assumed to be vital and urgent. The three generations of Socrates' family may not all live together, but the family members conceive of themselves as a tightly knit bloc (*domus*) which has to remain intact into the future and which cannot allow a widowed but fertile woman to remain unmarried indefinitely (*Met*. 1.5–6). The household *(familia)* is an entity that has to be safeguarded against imminent danger by every means possible, for example by fixing owls to the house's doorposts to avert evil (*Met*. 3.23). So it is a particular misfortune if children predecease their parents, not just because of the untimeliness of death itself, but because of the dashed hopes for the family's future the children represent. The *paterfamilias* who finds his three adult sons killed in a dispute with a tyrannical landowner is so overwhelmed at their loss that he kills himself and brings the history of his family to a complete close (*Met*. 9.33–9); and an old, distraught man credibly in search of his missing grandson, his only relative, can be sympathetically received in his dread of foul play (*Met*. 8.20–1). Family misfortunes of this kind are palpably feared, and nothing is worse than the total destruction of the *domus* (*Met*. 4.34–5; 8.1; 9.31). In contrast, Lucius's restoration to human form brings joy to his family (*Met*. 11.18). Children are valued not precisely for their own sake, but for the communal family potential they embody.

3. *Conflict*. Adultery provides one reason why a man might summarily divorce a wife and expel her from his home, as in the case of the well-to-do miller and his peccant partner (*Met*. 9.28). Remarriage might then be a possibility, and in turn the creation of a blended family, which itself could become the seedbed of familial tensions, as the example of the stepmother who tried to seduce her stepson suggests. The miller's wife was in fact already a second wife and a stepmother, as becomes clear after the miller's death when a previously unmentioned daughter unexpectedly appears to mourn him. The daughter had left her father's house when she herself married and moved to another town (*Met*. 9.31). Her story too hints at conflict resulting from serial marriage. Whatever the cause, there was nothing to prevent a man abandoning his family and taking a new wife in a new city if he so chose: this is what the travelling merchant Aristomenes did, terror-stricken after witnessing the grisly demise of Socrates that the witch Meroe had contrived (*Met*. 1.19).

Anxieties might arise from many other circumstances. Not too much perhaps should be made of the sisterly jealousies that drive the story of Psyche and Cupid. But consider the story of a woman who is condemned to the beasts

after murdering her sister-in-law, her husband and her daughter, as well as the second doctor mentioned earlier. This is the woman who eventually finds herself on the point of appearing in a live sex-show with the Ass (*Met*. 10.23–8). The woman was the wife of the young man who took his considerably younger sister into their home and married her to one of his friends, which is when her problems began. In this complex domestic setting – the two married couples seem to have been part of the same household – the wife began to fear her sister-in-law as a rival for her husband's attentions and brutally despatched her. Her husband became sick with grief at his sister's death, so his wife decided to poison him too. Then, to remove his heir, she poisoned her own infant daughter, understanding the law well enough to know that she could inherit from her child. This is a sordid tale, and it does not have to be read as a reflection of frequent events in everyday life. But it is interesting because it takes complex family living arrangements as a credible premise for the sensationalistic events recounted, and because it assumes that antagonisms naturally develop among the members of a domestic group of this sort. Indeed, this case was built on a prior anxiety of a different type, for the doomed sister was the child of the father who had ordered his pregnant wife to kill her baby if she were to give birth to a girl. In his absence, his wife (the young man's mother) had disobeyed her husband, and had given the girl she bore to neighbours, telling her husband that the child was dead (*Met*. 10.23). She is shown torn between duty to her husband and her natural love for her child, a perhaps not uncommon dilemma in antiquity. The narrative at least successfully evokes the psychological turmoil involved in the woman's decision, which the ancient reader was evidently expected to understand.

Altogether the *Metamorphoses* unfolds a rich social tapestry before its reader's eyes. There is no single family or household form that predominates, but instead Apuleius's story reveals a series of domestic arrangements that range from the very simple – the household of the poor solitary or that of the rich solitary and his slaves – to the very complex elite household which contains a plurality of interrelated conjugal or nuclear units and many other comparable units among its dependants. Physically there is a similar span. Residential space runs from the primitive huts of rural herdsmen to the opulent urban mansions of the *domi nobiles*. Rich and poor, however, live cheek by jowl without any obvious discomfort on either side. As a social unit the 'family' may be confined to, or extend beyond, a household's members, and it is often understood to embrace a wide network of kin. In elite households relationships between unrelated occupants, principally slave-owners and slaves, may attain an affective intimacy definable as familial in a broad sense, reflecting the fuzzy meaning of the Latin term *familia* – usually not

a family in any modern sense but a domestic group, especially a group of slaves. The family is strongly patriarchal in character, and comprises in the main a set of vertical relationships between a man and those subject to his authority, his wife, his children, and his slaves, though women by no means lack initiative or agency. Above all, the family is a collective unit to which all its members must contribute for the good of the whole, and in which individuality is subordinated to a communal ethic. It is a source of sustenance for its members, but equally a fragile entity prone to disruption resulting from untimely death or the hazards of human frailty. Slaves are especially vulnerable to the whims and dictates of those who own them, their prospects of family stability never more than precarious.[2]

II

The diversity of family life on display in the *Metamorphoses* is to be regarded as an authentic representation of the diversity of family life in the Roman world of the high imperial age in which Apuleius lived. How justifiable is such a proposition, given the fictional character of the source?

One immediate difficulty to face is that the core story of the *Metamorphoses*, the conversion of a human being to animal form through the application of a magical spell, and the subsequent restoration to human shape through the miraculous intervention of the goddess Isis, is fanciful in the extreme and defies all claims to literalism. In the first instance, the *Metamorphoses* is a work of the literary imagination. Every work of literature, however, no matter how unrelated on the surface its subject matter might be to the everyday world of its author, is a historical document of some sort, expressing certain assumptions about the place and time and society in which it was created: no literary artist can live and write utterly free from contemporary influences, ideas, and social practices. Within the Western literary tradition, the 'realistic' novel has a long pedigree, and is well understood to communicate something of the historical character of the societies in which its plots are set. The same is true of course of many contemporary novels. The *Metamorphoses* is not a realistic novel in quite the same manner as the novels of the modern tradition, but it has long been known that it contains many legal, institutional, and other topical elements that make indisputable the placement of Lucius's preposterous story in a perceptibly Roman imperial milieu. The political, administrative, and economic structures of the work are those of Apuleius's own age, which means that as a plausible corollary its social structures are too, no matter what the degree of narrative exaggeration built upon them. It can scarcely be doubted, for example, that the Roman empire of the first and second centuries was a

world in which wealthy decurions commonly owned slaves who worked as cooks, doorkeepers, waiters, messengers, and footmen; and it is self-evident that the story of Lucius is not located in a make-believe world like that of the strange men and monsters on the moon conjured up in Lucian's *True History*. Whatever the elements of fantasy that Apuleius's story of Lucius involves, for present purposes the assumption of what is normative in the underlying portrait of society, and of the structure of society, is crucially significant.[3]

Another problem arises from the fact that Apuleius's novel is not a completely original composition, but an adaptation, or perhaps at times a translation, of a lost Greek forerunner. How, therefore, unless an immediate adaptation, can it reflect his own contemporary society? The Greek forerunner is known only from an epitome, also written in Greek, the *Onos* ascribed to Lucian (though it is almost certainly not Lucian's creation), and so the extent to which Apuleius adapted or translated the Greek work is a question impossible to answer. Many of the basic elements of the story appear to be taken from the forerunner. The households of Milo and Charite, including the rural slaves and the cruel boy, have their equivalents in the epitome, as do the households represented by the slave cook and his quick-thinking wife, the miller, the solitary market gardener, and the two slave brothers. Critics and commentators, however, tend to emphasize Apuleius's creativity in refashioning the story and to regard him as rather more than a slavish imitator. The story of Psyche and Cupid in the middle of the novel and the introduction of Isis at the end are notable of course in this respect, but it is especially relevant that there is nothing in the epitome comparable to the tales of adultery which seem to have appealed to Apuleius so much. It does not follow, therefore, that the *Metamorphoses* lacks contemporary significance because of its derivation from a Greek prototype, which may well in any case have been written not long before Apuleius's version. The epitome is set in Greece, as the original version doubtless was too, and towards the end of its story it brings in a figure who appears to be a Roman provincial governor (*Onos* 54). In all likelihood, therefore, the original was also set in the contemporary world of the Roman empire. Whether that is true or not, there can be no doubt that allusions in the *Metamorphoses* to specific sites in Rome and to Roman laws and practices are anything but topical and realistic. To all intents and purposes, Apuleius's *Metamorphoses* is a fictional story of everyday life in the era of Apuleius himself.[4]

One way to assess the fictional details itemized above is to compare them with 'hard' historical evidence. The primary purpose of the stories Apuleius (or Lucius) tells is to entertain those who read them. But once their embellishments are set aside, the patterns of family behaviour and underlying

household forms can be validated by material from non-fictional sources. Consider the story of the wicked stepmother. This is a classic example of a variation on a literary topos – its connection with if not derivation from the story of Phaedra is obvious – and a cautionary tale about the danger of an older husband loving his younger wife too much. But it contains all the same credible incidental features. Like the sons of Roman emperors, senators, and many others among the prosperous, the older son in the story, as noted above, has an *educator* on whom to call for advice, and the younger son a *paedagogus* to escort him home from school at lunchtime; and like innumerable real women in the Roman world, the stepmother herself has a dotal slave of her own to serve her (*Met*. 10.4, 5). Further, while a second marriage is required by the story in order to provide a stepmother, remarriage among elite families in the central period of Roman history is well attested, as were its direct consequences: households of half-siblings and step-siblings and wives close in age to their stepsons. This is not to imply of course that all stepmothers in the real world were like the wicked stepmother here. That would be nonsense. The example of the stepmother of Helvia praised by Helvia's son Seneca, and that of the stepmother who adopted and gave her name to the future emperor Galba, suggest that there were any number of generous and caring such women in Roman society over the course of time. But it is to say that the tradition of the wicked stepmother has an understandable origin under a demographic regime which, with a substantial age difference between husbands and wives, a high likelihood of remarriage, and the commonplace creation of step-relationships in newly reconstituted families, constantly threatened to disrupt what had once seemed to be social, and often economic, certitudes within families.[5]

Two items provide interesting comparisons. One suggests that an affair between stepmother and stepson was not unrealistic when women were closer in age to their husbands' sons than their husbands, the other that a murderous stepmother was not at all unknown. First, the jurist Marcian reports of Hadrian:

> It is said that when a certain man had killed in the course of a hunt his son, who had been committing adultery with his stepmother, the deified Hadrian deported him to an island [because he acted] more [like] a brigand in killing him than as [one] with a father's right; for paternal power ought to depend on compassion, not cruelty.

Second, the physician Galen records:

> A doctor was accused because he supplied a harmful drug. But its purchaser was a servant of the woman who needed it. And having got hold of it, she ordered a young

man (who was one of her stepson's attendants) to give it to him to drink; and it killed the boy. Everyone was then indiscriminately condemned, along with the stepmother: the man who administered the drug, the man who had bought it, and the doctor who had supplied it.

The anecdote is evidently true, even if it almost demands to be fictional.[6]

Think also of the two slave families mentioned earlier. If the element of melodrama is again set aside, what is left in the first instance is a *uilicus* and *uilica* and their offspring, a de facto slave family of a sort assumed desirable and natural by Roman writers on agriculture; and in the second instance, two more fellow slaves from a large urban *familia* who have formed a quasi-marital union and reproduced in a way attested countless times by funerary inscriptions from elite Roman households. Even Milo's conception of how the household is composed – householder, wife, children, slaves (*Met*. 1.26) – recalls the formulaic elements of the prayers for the well-being of what might be regarded as an ideal or typical household the elder Cato prescribes in the *De agricultura*, and the similar manner in which Cicero in his *Letters* often refers to his family and household. If Apuleius's stories, as stories, are sensationalistic, their social and demographic context is undeniably authentic.[7]

The various living arrangements on display in the *Metamorphoses* are governed by a set of variable and interrelated factors: wealth, rank, occupation, age, geographical location, individual preference. In several instances, however, as literary circumstances demand, households appear at specific moments in their histories, which means that their members can be counted as if a census were being taken. Milo's household for example comprises just three people, Milo himself, his wife Pamphile, and their slave Photis. It cannot be assumed that the *Metamorphoses* includes all the members of a given household when a household in a particular episode is described: a real census is impossible. But the results of assessing members of households in the work can be generally compared with those from the genuine census records of Roman Egypt, a body of data which offers the best evidence on household composition for the Roman imperial period as a whole. In broad terms the Egyptian households display a similar compositional variety to that evident in the *Metamorphoses*, ranging from households of solitaries or solitaries with lodgers or slaves, through households of co-residents (usually siblings) and of conjugal families, with or without slaves, to extended families and multiple families, again with or without slaves. In both instances, extended and multiple family households make up a considerable proportion of the total. The Egyptian census returns also show a diversity of social statuses among the declarants, from wealthy owners of relatively large complements

of slaves to men who work as weavers, donkey-drivers, stonemasons, scribes, doctors, and stenographers. Egypt of course had features of domestic life that were distinct if not unique, brother-sister marriage, and a relatively low level of slave-owning, and the census-like material in the *Metamorphoses* is far from complete. Nonetheless, the household world of the census returns appears to be essentially the same as the household world of Apuleius's composition, and acts to confirm the realism of the picture the author paints in his stories.[8]

As for family norms, again there is much that is consistent with the historical aspects of Roman family life established by modern studies. It is not controversial, for instance, to say that Roman marriages were often unions formed and influenced by a wide range of family members, that the interests of the wider family group were often taken into consideration, and that, in contrast to the modern Western norm, the emotional bond between the marrying couple, if present, was only one of a sequence of factors controlling the alliance. Certainly the concordant ideal of marriage is well attested. Nor is it controversial to acknowledge the reality of adultery in Roman society. As with divorce, its precise incidence is impossible to determine in the absence of quantifiable data, and the record as it is, coming from literary authors (such as Tacitus and Plutarch) may be affected by male anxieties about female behaviour, or misbehaviour, or simply illustrate techniques of invective, and so not be neutrally reported. But the cases of adultery recorded by ancient historians and biographers cannot all have been imagined, and there must have been some perceptible behavioural basis behind the passage of the important Augustan *Lex Julia de adulteriis coercendis* and the subsequent development of this statute well into the Severan period.[9]

Children, moreover, were highly valued in Roman society, as many items illustrate, artistic representations, for example, or the manner in which the untimely dead were fondly commemorated by their parents, although valuation was tempered by a severity of attitude when practical decisions had to be made about the disposal of those judged unviable or too heavy a burden for the family to bear. Infant exposure was widely practised, even if its incidence is again difficult to measure. It can also be said that young and old in the Roman world were mutually interdependent, the latter looking to the former for support in old age or in continuing the family name and the family traditions in cult and public attainment, the former looking to the latter for education and preparation for adult life, and, in elite families if not more widely, the provision of an inheritance and a marriage alliance.[10]

The family also was a perennial source of potential conflict and tension as the pattern of marriage, remarriage, and family reconstitution repeated itself. The antagonisms in Cicero's family attested in his correspondence lend

particular plausibility to the stories of conflict visible in the *Metamorphoses*. But the most appropriate evidence comes from Apuleius's own personal life and his marriage in Tripolitania to the widow Aemilia Pudentilla, which immediately brought with it the role of stepfather and embroilment in an extensive family dispute over the control of a widow's wealth. With this case history at the forefront of attention and modern reconstructions of patterns of mortality and simulations of the life course equally in mind, it is not controversial to say that Roman family life was demographically precarious.[11]

III

Correspondences can be drawn between Latin fiction and Roman realities, but Apuleius's story is set in Greece. In what sense therefore can the evidence of the *Metamorphoses* be evidence of Roman family life?

One answer is that it is not, that whatever connections the *Metamorphoses* has with social realism should be viewed only in the context of Greece and Greek society in the Roman imperial age. Obviously enough the difficulty is one of defining 'Roman': is the term to be restricted to Rome the city, to Roman Italy, or to the Roman West, or can it apply to any region of the Mediterranean in the imperial period where aspects of Roman culture were present, as they were indeed in mainland Greece? In view of the Egyptian census material, it can be argued that the households in the *Metamorphoses* are of kinds that could be seen throughout the Roman Mediterranean as a whole, whatever allowance might be made (as it must) for regional peculiarities, and that the fictional diversity of domestic groups and family structures is likely to be as applicable to Roman Italy, or to the North African provinces, as to the literary work's immediate geographical setting. What is assumed or implied about family life in the *Metamorphoses*, I suggest, should be taken to have very broad application, and to mirror much of a Mediterranean world that its author had seen for himself. At the same time, the manner in which Apuleius describes family life has to be related to the process of his own cultural formation.[12]

Apuleius was bilingual in Latin and Greek. Some of his scientific works were written in Greek, but he chose to write the *Metamorphoses* in Latin. The terms in which he tells his family stories are therefore traditional Roman terms. The decision to write in Latin – what he sometimes calls 'our language' (e.g., *De deo Socratis* 150: *nostra lingua*) – implies that the audience to which Apuleius intended the *Metamorphoses* to appeal was predominantly western rather than eastern, an audience able to recognize and identify cultural idioms familiar to all who had been educated, as he himself had been, in the Roman literary and rhetorical tradition. The patterns of

culture found in the domestic episodes of the *Metamorphoses* are conventionally, and strikingly, 'Roman.'[13]

Consider from this perspective the story of the mother who bears a daughter but gives the child to neighbours to raise because of the father's instruction to expose an unwanted girl. The traditional virtue of *obsequium* is given prominence throughout, negatively in the failure of a wife to obey her husband, and positively first in the willingness of a son to obey his mother when help for his sister is requested, and second in the unquestioning acceptance by a sister of what she believes to be her brother's instructions (*Met*. 10.23, 24). Familial hierarchies of deference are strongly on display. There are other active virtues too: the son's kindly actions towards his sister are both an *officium*, an obligation he must fulfil to her, and attributable to *pietas*, family duty or responsibility. When the family's guilty secret must be kept, *humanitas* can provide an appropriate cover for the son's actions, while the woman's failure to obey her husband is justified by the stronger claim of maternal *pietas* to her infant daughter (*Met*. 10.23, 26). The son's wife, in contrast, is able to turn *pietas* to wicked advantage in her dealings with the doctor, and she offends against all expectations of *fides*, loyalty to her husband, by plotting his death (*Met*. 10.25, 26, 27). Can anything be imagined that is more culturally characteristic than the concepts of *obsequium*, *officium*, *humanitas*, *pietas*, and *fides*? They may, it is true, have had counterparts in the original Greek version of the story (although there is little sign of them in the *Onos*), but as Latin terms deliberately chosen by Apuleius they communicate an ethos, a view of the world, that is by definition quintessentially Roman.

Traditional Roman virtues are equally prominent elsewhere. In the wicked stepmother story the older son is a young man marked by *pietas* and *modestia* (*Met*. 10.2). He displays *obsequium* when he visits his stepmother's bedroom at her command, and she in her infatuation for him loses all sense of *pudor (Met*. 10.3). His *educator*, meantime, is a man of *grauitas* (*Met*. 10.4). Again, the slave wife whose sagacity saves her husband the cook from their master's anger is characterised as 'loyal,' *fida* (*Met*. 8.31), as though she were a free woman of respectable status (she compares favourably in fact with the sex-show wife), and the slave wife who kills herself and her infant does so because of the shame, *contumelia*, that falls upon her when she learns that her husband has a mistress (*Met*. 8.22). She is only a slave, but she too shares the values of society at large. The disgrace of *contumelia* is also felt by Charite's rejected suitor Thrasyllus (*Met*. 8.2), and *contumelia* is enough to impel the fuller to kill his wife's lover (*Met*. 9.25). The slave brothers who live together are joined by *societas*, and threatened, when Lucius steals their food, by *discordia*. In the story of Psyche and

Cupid, sisters are expected as a matter of course to recognize *pietas* towards one another (*Met*. 10.14; 5.19).

Female propriety is a particular concern of the *Metamorphoses*. Charite remains obedient, *obiens*, to her parents even in the distress of her husband's death, feels that it is a matter of *pudor* to observe a year's mourning for him, and still thinks of herself as a *pudica mulier* when she takes revenge on his murderer (*Met*. 8.7, 9, 12). The super-virtuous Plotina, who appears in an inserted story told by a brigand named Haemus, who is really Tlepolemus in disguise, is a Roman woman of exceptional *fides* and *pudicitia*, and in exemplary fashion fulfils the ideal of displaying the dutiful comportment expected of a wife (*Met*. 5.10, *uxoris officiosa facies*): Haemus says that she followed her husband into exile when he was falsely condemned by the courts (*Met*. 7.6–7), having properly provided for the future well-being of his family by bearing him ten children beforehand (not necessarily to be taken as an exaggeration). In the world of the *Metamorphoses*, it happens, the very name of mother carries an inherent *dignitas* (*Met*. 5.12), and not surprisingly Lucius's own mother Salvia is said to be a woman of *generosa probitas* ('breeding and modesty') to those who know her (*Met*. 2.2).

Female decorum, however, is more conspicuous in the *Metamorphoses* by its absence than its presence, and predictably so in the adultery tales. The story of the slave-owning decurion Barbarus, a celebrated lover who has an affair with a woman while her husband is away from their house, is a story that centres on a wife's loss of *pudicitia* (for money no less) and *castitas*, two virtues of which every ideal Roman wife was supposed to be the embodiment (*Met*. 9.17, 18, 19). The *operarius* who returns home to find his doors locked and bolted – his wife is inside with her lover – commends his wife for her *continentia*, which is a joke of course but *continentia* is a virtue expected of a wife to prevent misfortune, the great fear of which has already been seen, afflicting her family (*Met*. 9.5; 5.12). The miller's wife is said in a catalogue of faults to be hostile to *fides* and an enemy of *pudicitia*, but then ironically is called a *pudica uxor* as she awaits her lover, and *pudicissima* once her adultery has been discovered (*Met*. 9.14, 22, 28). Her revenge against the miller is motivated by the outrage, *contumelia*, she thinks she has suffered once her misbehaviour has been revealed (*Met*. 9.29). The fuller's wife in turn is a woman whose *pudor* had also seemed beyond reproach, another loyal wife, *fida* (*Met*. 9.23, 24), or so it seemed to the miller, who tells her tale to his wife. The latter, concealing her own lover as she listens, reproaches her neighbour as *perfida* and *impudica*, lacking the *dignitas* of a married woman (*Met*. 9.26).[14]

It is a familiar fact of Rome's history in the high imperial age that the ruling class was increasingly recruited from provincial, at first especially

western, sources of supply. Men from families prominent in the cities of the empire acquired through education and the service of the Caesars the culture and values of the capital, absorbed the richness of its historical tradition, and in due course left a legacy of *Romanitas* to their own descendants. Apuleius came from the relatively obscure city of Madauros in Africa Proconsularis, and was of decurial background, though little is known in detail of his family. Because of the renown he gained, and still possesses, as a Latin author it is easy to overlook his local origins and the way in which they might have shaped his early life, and easy to gloss over what was involved in his acquisition of a Roman cultural identity. For any aspirant provincial, whether or not the heights of a military or administrative career were in view from the outset, to be educated in the Roman tradition was a process that took time, required resources, and often, as happened with Apuleius, demanded travel on an extensive scale.[15]

Through his education when a boy and young man in Carthage, Athens, and Rome, Apuleius made himself fully Roman in a cultural sense. The legal allusions and references that pervade the *Metamorphoses* reveal a man with considerable knowledge of the law of Rome, knowledge which forms just one aspect of Apuleius's 'Roman' identity. Likewise, the wealth of literary allusions in the novel, from Cato and Lucretius to Lucan and Tacitus, suggests a deep immersion in the Roman literary canon, from perhaps a very early stage in life, in a figure, however, for whom Punic culture is likely to have been equally if not more familiar and influential. This, it must be emphasized, was all knowledge that had to be learned, through study and application, and, in the case of an individual from the fringes of empire where local traditions were as important and vibrant as those of the ruling power, through a conscious choice to master the ways of Rome. It was not axiomatic that every man from Madauros, even if originating from its decurial order, should come in the second century to know the law and literature of Rome as well as Apuleius did.[16]

Consider two items of Romano-African history that illustrate how important it is to understand that the author of the *Metamorphoses* was born into a society that had its own culturally distinct character. The first concerns the sanctuary of Tanit at Carthage, which Apuleius can be presumed to have seen many times. When he studied there, which must have been roughly in the 130s, Carthage was in many ways an impressive imperial city whose grand public buildings and monuments proclaimed and advertised to everyone who saw them the city's façade of *Romanitas*. But local, pre-Roman forms of social activity had not been altogether swept away by the Romanizing physical development of the city in the previous century and a half. In time, the ancient Carthaginian goddess Tanit assumed the Latinate

form of Juno Caelestis, and a clear break or disjunction in cult practices might consequently be assumed between the old (Punic) and the new (Roman). The archaeology of the sanctuary of Tanit, however, indicates the reverse: a close connection between the Punic and the Roman forms, which in turn suggests that there was little change over time in the way the goddess was worshipped and conceptualized by the local Carthaginian population. As late as the fifth century, Augustine (*De ciu. D.* 2.26; cf. 2.4) could describe the droves of worshippers who still then flocked to the sanctuary to engage in ancient forms of worship; the rituals the worshippers performed outraged the vitriolic puritan. But to generations of pre-Christian Carthaginians, and still to some in Augustine's day, the combination of prayer-offerings to the virgin goddess and theatrical depictions of sexually explicit acts must have been perfectly normal, satisfying, and enjoyable to the audiences of men and women who watched them. Before Apuleius's departure from Carthage, Punic Tanit is likely to have been far more familiar to him than most of the other mother goddesses who could be subsumed under the Roman identity of Juno, and he can be presumed to have witnessed in the mid-second century the kinds of sights and rituals Augustine much later describes. He was conscious enough of the virgin goddess of lofty Carthage who was borne on the back of a lion to include her in the *Metamorphoses* (*Met*. 6.4).[17]

The second item is the mausoleum of the veteran soldier T. Flavius Secundus at Cillium, together with its long poem, or poems, that Flavius's like-named son commissioned in the middle of the second century to commemorate his father. The elder Secundus had probably served, for thirty-three years, as a Roman auxiliary. He then settled at Cillium and prospered as a farmer, living to a great age. His grandiose mausoleum, a structure of a common type in Roman North Africa, is a testament to the local distinction that he and his descendants came to enjoy, a distinction made plain by the titles of priesthoods and offices recorded on the family's epitaphs. T. Flavius Secundus's family was a typical 'Romanized' African family, but one domiciled in a city that was at first no more than a military outpost on the edge of the desert that achieved municipal status perhaps only under Trajan. The commemorative poem is technically very sophisticated, and shows the particular influence of Statius. It stands as evidence of the high literary culture to which Secundus's family aspired, and of the 'Roman' character the family wished to display to all who passed by their tomb. It also shows how Roman values came to be absorbed by a local community, for the poem is inspired above all by a son's wish to memorialize his father through an act of Roman *pietas*, a term to which the poet gives considerable attention. Yet for all its Roman pretensions, the mausoleum is anything but Roman in style: twelve metres or so in height and in three distinct architectural sections,

it displays elements of a widespread native – 'tower-tomb' – monumental tradition, manifestations of which were, quite literally, to be seen even in Carthage. Thus the second-century mausoleum of M. Vibius Tertullus and his family from the Yasmina cemetery in the south-west of the city shows the 'Romanized' Tertullus, perhaps a breeder of horses, as a man of culture sitting in a high-backed chair reading from a scroll with the She-Wolf and Twins prominently displayed, but it follows at the same time the local architectural conventions of the Secundus family tomb. Both items again symbolize the cultural mixture of old and new to which men like Apuleius were exposed from the earliest moments of their lives; and they help make clear that a Roman concept evident in the *Metamorphoses* such as *pietas* was not necessarily normative to all the inhabitants of a local African community such as Cillium or Madauros. Though largely now imperceptible, indigenous traditions were probably just as strong. Plutarch records a marriage custom at Lepcis Magna whereby a new bride, on the day after her wedding, steeled herself to deal with the 'stepmotherliness' of her mother-in-law by deliberately asking for something – a pot – she knew would be refused. Soon afterwards Tertullian was to indicate that despite the intervention of a Roman proconsul, the ancient African practice of child sacrifice was still carried out in secret.[18]

The moralistic idiom in which the family stories of the *Metamorphoses* are told suggests a provincial author who had fully absorbed the traditional moral code of Rome, and one who wrote for an audience likely to identify with it: a Latinate audience of the educated like himself, both in the capital and throughout the empire at large. When the work was composed is unknown, but the most plausible view is that it belongs to the period Apuleius spent in Carthage in the 160s or later. Even if an earlier date cannot be ruled out, the work was written by a man who from boyhood had spent many years travelling the Mediterranean in pursuit of the literary and philosophical education that allowed him, by the time he was put on trial at Sabratha, in his early thirties, to style himself a man of *doctrina*. Carthage, Athens, Rome – he knew all these cities intimately, and in journeying from one to the other he had passed, it can hardly have been otherwise, through innumerable cities, towns, villages, hamlets, and country estates. After Rome the journey for knowledge continued: following the great coastal highway across Tripolitania, Apuleius set out for Alexandria in Egypt, where he planned to study further, though the journey was never completed. He was detained by illness in the town of Oea and there met and married Pudentilla. Altogether, however, his educational travels introduced Apuleius to the same range of social sights that Lucius witnessed in his peregrinations, to the men, women, and children, that is, of every conceivable description who populate the pages

of the *Metamorphoses*: the *domi nobiles*, the merchants and manufacturers, the poor of the countryside and the beggars of the city, the farm workers and day labourers, and slaves of every stripe. The literary debt of the *Metamorphoses* to the lost Greek original cannot be forgotten. But because of its clearly topical colouring, it would be wrong to imagine that the work is not in some measure the result of Apuleius's own life experience, in which his journeys for knowledge played a dominant role.[19]

Two second-century Greek works might be kept in mind to understand the nature and consequences of the travels Apuleius took: Pausanias's *Description of Greece*, in all its rich and abundant topographical detail, the result of the author's own painstaking travels; and Artemidorus's *Interpretation of Dreams*, which brings before its reader the vast array of people, of every sort and condition, the interpreter encountered when journeying across the Mediterranean in search of dreamers and their dreams. Apuleius's journeys were of a similar sort. They exposed him on the one hand to the kind of physical regimen that the *Description of Greece* presupposes, slow and laborious travel by ship and foot, horseback and mule-drawn carriage, and on the other hand to the almost limitless list of characters met in the *Interpretation of Dreams*: tax collectors, priests, prostitutes, goatherds, sophists, innkeepers, shopkeepers, jugglers, dancers, seafarers, donkey-drivers, moneylenders, cooks, beekeepers, fruit farmers, beggars, philosophers, poets, criminals, midwives, labourers, doctors, soldiers, painters. Against this background, the *Metamorphoses* emerges as not so much a fiction about Greece, as a story whose settings and characters are a composite reflection of all that Apuleius experienced on his travels in the world of Rome. For Apuleius as for Pausanias, or even Lucius, travel was or must have been physically arduous, often taking the traveller over difficult and remote terrain, and presenting the possibility of a series of dangerous assaults from local residents, outlaws, animals, and arrogant Roman soldiers; and for Apuleius as for Artemidorus, or even Lucius, there were or must have been millers and fullers, herdsmen and cheese merchants, moneylenders and donkey-women, innkeepers, decurions and soldiers to be seen everywhere he went. The household and family situations portrayed in the *Metamorphoses* should similarly be understood as faithful reflections of the real family and household configurations that existed across the Roman Mediterranean, that Apuleius himself witnessed and observed, and that he describes in terms of the traditional Roman culture he had chosen to make his own. On this understanding, even the description of Cupid's fabulous palace in the central inserted tale of the work (*Met*. 5.1) can be taken to reflect the idioms of contemporary appointment and decoration in the luxurious villas of the rich, which Apuleius through his marriage came to know well.[20]

IV

The *Metamorphoses* is first and foremost a work of the literary imagination. But it is also a historical document. Its 'Roman' character can be understood in two senses: first, in that it allows access to the rich diversity of life and society of the Roman imperial age, and second, in that it expresses how the traditional culture of Rome the city, *Romanitas*, could be absorbed and accepted as his own by the provincial of means. For historians of Roman family life the work has a special importance, unfolding in a highly colourful manner the various household forms to be seen in the real world of Apuleius and his contemporaries, and bringing to life, across the whole range of society, the family norms and tensions of that world. Whereas epitaphs silently commemorate the families of the dead, and historical literature concentrates to the point of obscurity on the families of the elite, paradoxically the fictive families of Apuleius reveal a society, in all its true complexity and infinite variety, of living men and women.

Endnote

Families and households in Apuleius's *Metamorphoses*:

1 Family of Socrates:
(i) Socrates, itinerant merchant; (ii) his wife; (iii) their children (number unknown); (iv) his wife's parents.
(1.5–8)

2 Family of Aristomenes:
(i) Aristomenes, itinerant merchant; (ii) first wife in Aegium; (iii) second wife elsewhere.
(1.19)

3 Family and household of Milo:
(i) Milo, *nummularius* (cf. Andreau 1999: 175 s.v. for the type); (ii) his wife, Pamphile; (iii) their slave, Photis.
(1.21–23, 26, 3.22–8)

4 Family and household of Lucius:
(i) Lucius's mother's ancestors: Plutarch and his nephew Sextus; (ii) Lucius's father, Theseus; (iii) Lucius's mother, Salvia, his father's wife; (iv) Lucius's maternal aunt, Byrrhena; (v) Byrrhena's husband; (vi) Lucius; (vii) slaves: Byrrhena's retinue and domestics, *nutrix* of Byrrhena and Salvia, Lucius's *educatores*, Lucius's travel attendants.
(1.23, 2.2–4, 15, 19–20, 3.12)

5 Family and household of *matrona*;
(i) husband of *matrona*, deceased; (ii) *matrona*, a widow; (iii) husband's maternal uncle; (iv) slaves: *matrona*'s *actor* and *ancilla*.
(2.23–9)

6 Family of market gardener (*hortulanus*):
(i) *hortulanus*; (ii) his wife.
(4.3)

7 Household of Chryseros:
(i) Chryseros, *nummularius*.
(4.9–10)

8 Household of old woman:
(i) old woman.
(4.12)

9 Household of Democharis:
(i) Democharis, decurion; (ii) slaves: large staff, including *custodes, ianitor*.
(4.18)

10 Family and household of Charite:
(i) Charite's father; (ii) his wife, Charite's mother; (ii) Charite, their daughter; (iv) Charite's first husband, her cousin Tlepolemus; (v) Charite's suitor, Thrasyllus; (vi) *cognati* and *affines*; (vii) *clientes*; (viii) slaves: Charite's father and mother have large *familia*, including *uernulae, alumni, famuli*, Charite's *nutrix, pastores/rustici* (*equisones, opiliones, busequae* [including cruel boy and his mother and father, head herdsman and his wife, men, women, and children]).
(4.23–4, 26–7, 7.13N15, 17–28, 8.1–14, 15–23)

11 Family of Plotina:
(i) Plotina's husband; (ii) Plotina.
(7.6–7)

12 Family of slave *uilicus*:
(i) *uilicus*; (ii) his wife, *conserua*; (iii) their infant child.
Note: the family is part of a larger household of rural slaves owned by an anonymous slave-owner.
(8.22)

13 Family of slave cook (*cocus*):
(i) cook; (ii) his wife, *conserua*; (iii) their son.

Note: the family is part of a large household of slaves owned by a leading citizen that comprises domestics (including a *famulus, puer* [messenger], *mulio, cocus, cubicularius*, and a *medicus*) and rural workers (*coloni*).
(8.31, 9.1–2)

14 Family of *operarius*:
(i) *operarius* (*faber*); (ii) his wife.
(9.5–7)

15 Family and household of miller (*pistor*):
(i) miller; (ii) miller's first wife (deceased?); (iii) their adult married daughter; (iv) their son-in-law, the daughter's husband; (v) miller's second wife; (vi) slaves: mill hands (including lame *senex*).
(9.10–17, 22, 27–8, 31)

16 Family and household of Barbarus:
(i) Barbarus, decurion; (ii) his wife, Arete; (iii) slaves: Myrmex and *conserui*.
(9.17–21)

17 Family of fuller (*fullo*):
(i) fuller; (ii) his wife.
(9.24–5)

18 Household of market gardener (*hortulanus*):
(i) *hortulanus*.
(9.32)

19 Family and household of *paterfamilias*:
(i) *paterfamilias*; (ii) his three adult sons; (ii) slaves: considerable number.
(9.33–9)

20 Household of pauper (*pauper, agrestis*):
(i) pauper.
(9.35)

21 Household of rich young landowner:
(i) landowner; (ii) slaves: considerable number, including *pastores*.
(9.35–8)

22 Family and household of decurion:
(i) decurion; (ii) decurion's first wife, deceased; (iii) their adult son; (iv) decurion's second wife; (v) their twelve-year-old son; (vi) slaves: sons' *educator* and *paedagogus*, a *cursor*, second wife's dotal slave.
(10.1–12)

23 Family of slave brothers:
(i) pastry cook; (i) chef, his brother

Note: the brothers are owned by Thiasus of Corinth, who also has at least one *libertus*, on an outlying estate; they have *conserui*. Finkelpearl 1998: 160 doubts that they are biological brothers.
(10.13–17)

24 Family of condemned woman:
(i) father of young man; (ii) father's wife, mother of young man; (iii) their son, young man; (iv) their daughter, young man's sister; (v) her husband, young man's brother-in-law; (vi) young man's wife, the condemned woman; (vii) their daughter; (viii) *affines*; (ix) slaves: *familia* includes *cubicularii*.
(10.23–8)

25 Family of doctor:
(i) doctor; (ii) his wife.
(10.25, 27, 28)

6

Sacrificing the Family: Christian Martyrs and Their Kin

Like all creeds which claim the total allegiance of the individual … early Christianity was a powerful divisive force.

E.R. Dodds

Apuleius lived in an age when Christianity was assuming a prominent place in the religious life of the Roman empire. It has often been thought that his description of the miller's wife in the *Metamorphoses* (9.14) gives evidence of his awareness of what was still a relatively new but now unmistakable cult, a form of religion no longer regarded as an aberrant branch of Judaism, as in the beginning, but as something that had its own independent identity, sectarianism notwithstanding. Whatever the truth on this point, on circumstantial grounds it is unlikely that Apuleius knew nothing of the new religion. Not only did his Mediterranean travels provide many opportunities for hearing of Christians, but Carthage in the second century was a particularly important Christian centre, and either during the years he spent there as a child or later in the 160s after his trial, Apuleius must be presumed to have encountered in the city the new beliefs and practices. He may well also have been exposed to one of the most public, and spectacular, ways in which Christians were making their presence in society felt, that is, through the penalties of execution that some religionists suffered for refusing to renounce their beliefs as Roman authority at times required them to do. Carthage itself was a site at which martyrdom, as it prejudicially came to be called within the Christian tradition, is well attested: the earliest known case, that of the so-called Scillitan martyrs, belongs to July of the year 180, at which time Apuleius would have been aged about fifty-five and still perhaps alive to witness the trial of the dozen or so defendants from the little town of Scilli who were sentenced to death by P. Vigellius Saturninus, an official who was probably his exact contemporary. He may even have witnessed

their execution. The perennially important historical question that arises, however, is what difference did Christianity make. In this essay I digress from Apuleius's literary works to examine another type of evidence that in allowing one answer to the question to emerge contributes to knowledge of the world in which those works were composed, and offers in so doing a counterpoint to the events especially of the *Apology*.[1]

I

One of the many complaints brought against Christians by the late second-century polemicist Celsus was that in their zeal for gaining converts Christian evangelists of low estate habitually ensnared young children of better background and turned them against their non-Christian fathers. Only they, the Christians, knew the proper way to live and to find true happiness, and so they encouraged the respectable young to disregard, and even to rebel against, their pagan fathers and the foolish views their fathers held. Children's teachers (*didaskaloi*) they likewise attacked:

> In private houses also we see wool-workers, cobblers, laundry-workers, and the most illiterate and bucolic yokels, who would not dare to say anything at all in front of their elders and more intelligent masters. But whenever they get hold of children in private and some stupid women with them, they let out some astounding statements as, for example, that they must not pay any attention to their father and school-teachers, but must obey them; they say that these talk nonsense and have no understanding, and that in reality they neither know nor are able to do anything good, but are taken up with mere empty chatter. But they alone, they say, know the right way to live, and if the children would believe them, they would become happy and make their home happy as well. And if just as they are speaking they see one of the school-teachers coming, or some intelligent person, or even the father himself, the more cautious of them flee in all directions; but the more reckless urge the children on to rebel. They whisper to them that in the presence of their father and their schoolmasters they do not feel able to explain anything to the children, since they do not want to have anything to do with the silly and obtuse teachers who are totally corrupted and far gone in wickedness and who inflict punishment on the children. But, if they like, they should leave father and their schoolmasters, and go along with the women and little children who are their playfellows to the wooldresser's shop, or to the cobbler's or the washerwoman's shop, that they may learn perfection. And by saying this they persuade them.[2]

Celsus's remarks imply that proselytizing Christians of the second century were seriously undermining the conventional relationship between father and child in Roman society, that they were subverting a crucial element

of traditional Roman family life. Fathers at Rome had always been expected to look to the well-being of their children, to provide for them, and to prepare them for adulthood, and this obligation prevailed wherever Roman culture established itself. In elite circles, of which most is known, it was the father's duty to ensure the continuation of the family name and cult, and to see to the maintenance of family success in the public domain. Fathers were particularly expected to look to the education of their sons and to contract suitable matches for their daughters (which is not to say that daughters might not be well educated as well), and presumably elite fathers set standards for the rest of society. There is evidence to suggest so. In return, children were expected to show their fathers dutiful obedience and respect, to assimilate and later replicate the family ideals their fathers inculcated in them, and to care for them, and their mothers, in old age. Roman culture was fundamentally patriarchal, with the *pater* always the uniquely dominant head of his household, exercising an authority (*patria potestas*) unique to Roman culture. If within the Roman empire as a whole in Celsus's day local family traditions other than those of Rome were certainly to be found – Greek and Jewish traditions, for instance – nowhere was the Roman paradigm of patriarchy seriously at odds with other social and cultural norms. To the extent therefore that Christians were assaulting the bond between father and child, they were threatening in a sense the very foundations of society.[3]

To think of early Christians as subverters of the family seems strange, if not paradoxical. From an early date in their history Christians had appropriated the language of the family to characterize the new community they were setting out to construct: they were all, for example, 'brothers' and 'sisters' in Christ, which suggests both that they recognized that the family was the fundamental building block of their society and that they wished it to remain so. Moreover, certain forms of early Christian teaching, as seen especially in the injunctions of the New Testament tradition of the 'household code,' offered prescriptions for behaviour within the family that if anything worked to reaffirm and strengthen traditional ideals: 'Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter towards them. Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord. Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they should become discouraged' (Colossians 3:18–21; cf. Ephesians 5:22–25, 6:1–4; 1 Peter 3:1, 7). Yet a rationale for assaulting conventional family structures could easily be found, if one were needed, in the teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, which in a manner completely different from that of the household-code tradition subordinated the interests of family to the spiritual development of the individual: 'For I have come to set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her

mother-in-law … He who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me. And he who loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me' (Matthew 10:35, 37); 'For from now on five in one house will be divided: three against two, and two against three. Father will be divided against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law' (Luke 12:52–3; cf. 14:26; Mark 10:29–30; Gospel of Thomas 101). From this perspective, the individual's spiritual progress was so important that nothing was to impede it, and if this meant abandoning family members or severing familial bonds, such was the price that had to be paid. In the end, therefore, the activities of which Celsus complained were based on ideas that were not just subversive; they were revolutionary, harbouring the potential to disrupt conventional familial structures and relationships over much of the ancient Mediterranean world.[4]

Was that potential ever realized? Certainly the various forms of asceticism with which the history of early Christianity is associated are likely, by their very nature, to have had an impact on the traditional ideology and patterns of family life. Thus the development of monastic communities, in providing alternative social arrangements for their members, and new attitudes towards marriage, as a result of which Christian men and women abandoned sexual relations, presumably had a detrimental effect on biological reproduction. What have been termed 'the anti-familial tendencies' of early Christian teaching are unlikely in other words to have been matters of abstraction alone. Here, however, I want to consider the relevance to the question of a different innovation, namely, early episodes of Christian martyrdom of the sort I referred to at the outset, the records of which have much of interest for family studies in the high imperial era. The pre-Constantinian records of martyrdom, the *Acts of the Christian Martyrs* as they are generally known, provide very vivid, even dynamic glimpses of family relationships and especially of families in turmoil. So it is the association between Christianity and family disruption that the documents reveal that form the main object of concern. What I want to illustrate is that through the vehicle of martyrdom Christianity promoted familial discord in a way that was new, and not at all part of Roman family experience in the pre-Christian epoch.[5]

II

Christian martyr acts are a unique type of evidence, the result, on the one hand, of the cult of everlasting glory through death for the faith some early Christians followed and, on the other hand, the willingness of Roman authorities to execute men and women whose lack of religious, and hence

political, loyalty to Rome was legally demonstrable. Whether they owe anything to a putative Christian invention of martyrdom is open to question. Chronologically, the martyr acts extend from the early second century to the early fourth century, while geographically they record events, or apparent events, from many regions of the empire but especially from North Africa and Asia Minor. Invariably, too, they reflect events, or apparent events, which took place in the cities of the empire. Their historicity has long been a matter of controversy. The documents vary a great deal in form and content, and are evidently the creation of Christian authors or redactors whose purpose was to extol martyrdom. As such they are overladen with fanciful embellishments and fictional elements. But many appear to derive either from records of trials held by Roman provincial governors when Christians were accused or suspected of contravening imperial edicts compelling them to participate in Roman religious rites, or else from reports of executions from people who had witnessed them. To this extent, whether in the form of trial summaries, epistles to Christian congregations, or extended narratives, the records are likely to reflect a factual substratum in most cases. For present purposes, however, the issue of factual authenticity is less important than the assumptions the documents make about the general norms of family life and the specific forms of family conduct martyrdom provoked. The records of martyrdom mirror, and derive much of their historical plausibility from, the idioms of urban, civic life in the second and third centuries. Consequently what they assume about family life must also bear a close relationship to conventional social reality, no matter what the factual accuracy of particular episodes. Similarly the family events recorded, no matter whether literally true in all cases, must be allowed a claim on historical plausibility since the original audiences of the martyrologies had to find them convincing. The *Acts of the Christian Martyrs* were intended to confirm the faith of those who read or heard them by inspiring admiration for, if not emulation of, the heroes who had given their lives for their belief in Christ. That purpose could hardly have been achieved had the factual record their authors described been anything, in principle, but recognizably credible to the documents' audiences.[6]

To turn then to the records in detail, a beginning can be made with a case of divorce at Rome in the middle of the second century. It followed a Roman woman's conversion to Christianity, and the consequent growth of a religious rift between the woman and her husband. The case is reported in the *Martyrdom of Ptolemaeus and Lucius*, which is an extract from Justin Martyr's *Second Apology* (2.2 [cf. Euseb. *HE* 4.17]). The Roman woman did not herself become a martyr. So her divorce cannot be said to have been due to the desire for a swift translation through death to a blessed

afterlife. But as a prelude to the main theme the case is immediately valuable for showing the impact on marriage that one partner's conversion to the new religion could have. The husband and wife (they are never named) were dissolute characters who for most of their marriage engaged in all sorts of immoral and scandalous behaviour. But when the wife heard the teachings of the Christian Ptolemaeus she converted and gave up her wicked ways. Subsequently she tried to convert her husband, too, but when he rejected her overtures she thought it would be wrong to continue to live with him, and so began to contemplate divorce. Those close to her, however, relatives it seems, advised her to remain married in the hope that eventually the husband would reform, and the woman acquiesced. But after reports arrived that the husband, on a visit to Alexandria, was behaving worse than ever, she 'repudiated' and left him, 'not wishing to become an accomplice in his crimes and injustices by remaining in wedlock with him, sharing his bed and board.'[7]

Divorce was common in Roman society, at least among the upper classes. The causes were multifarious: immorality of one sort or another, on one side or the other, or sometimes the demands of politics. This instance of divorce certainly depended, from the wife's point of view, on the husband's unacceptable behaviour, which apparently included, though it is only implied, sexual misconduct. His behaviour, however, had not been problematical before the wife's conversion, when she too had taken 'pleasure in drunkenness and every sort of vice.' Yet the woman's standards of propriety suddenly changed, and the case suggests, therefore, that the new religion could become an unanticipated source of friction in a marriage as one partner converted but not the other, and that it could create grounds for the termination of a union by unexpectedly changing the rules and the understandings that had previously governed a given marriage. In this case, there is no way of judging the protagonists' competing moral stances, of knowing how wicked the husband was or how morally transformed his wife became: Justin's account is obviously tendentious. But the wife's conversion unquestionably led to marital conflict, as she first formed the intention to divorce and then acted on the intention, and the conflict was not resolved quickly: for the husband challenged the divorce, on the grounds that his wife had left him without his consent; she appealed to the emperor, successfully; and he finally sought revenge by persecuting the unfortunate agent of his misfortune, the Christian teacher Ptolemaeus. None of this could have happened without the initial event of Christian conversion.[8]

It is possible that the divorce affected a wide circle of kin, not the spouses alone. If it was indeed relatives who advised her to stay with her husband when the woman first considered divorce, the advice given offers a hint, at

a minimum, of a threat the prospect of divorce raised before a broad family group which the group as a whole wished to eliminate. There are Roman precedents indeed for the extensive family's perception of a widespread problem that at first involved only two of its members and the family's consequent open expression of concern. But when the woman acted unilaterally and invoked the law to her personal advantage – *repudium* was the appropriate legal if perhaps uncommon recourse for a wife affected by her husband's shameful behaviour – she acted against the interests of the wider circle of kin, and her actions are likely to have had unsettling repercussions for its members. Those repercussions depended again in the first instance on the spread of the Christian message. A Christian audience would of course have been expected to applaud the woman's actions. Nonetheless, on a dispassionate view conversion to Christianity emerges in this case as a catalyst of family turmoil, as an individual's preoccupation with the spiritual suddenly altered the rules of comportment within marriage, and the impact was felt by both her marital partner and her wider family circle.[9]

Next a case of fraternal strife. In the *Martyrdom of Marian and James*, an account of the condemnation and execution of a Christian *lector* and deacon in North Africa in the mid-third century, the incidental history of a certain Aemilian is recounted. This man was a Christian of equestrian rank aged close to fifty who had lived a life of ascetic chastity and had recently been imprisoned for his faith. In prison he fasted and prayed. He also, as martyrs often did, had a vision, a report of which in his own words the *Martyrdom* preserves. In the dream Aemilian encountered his brother, a pagan who was ill disposed to him because of his Christian beliefs. The two conversed, antagonistically, the brother continually taunting Aemilian and asking ominous questions, Aemilian responding spiritedly and, in the end, triumphantly:

> Led out of prison … I was met by a pagan, my own brother in the flesh. Very inquisitive about our affairs, he asked in a taunting voice how we were getting on with the darkness and the starvation of prison.
>
> I replied that the soldiers of Christ even in a dungeon enjoy the most brilliant light, and in their fasting have the satisfying food of God's word. When he heard this, he said: 'You may be sure that a capital penalty will await all of you who are kept in prison, if you stubbornly persist!'
>
> But I was afraid that he had made up a lie to trick me. Wishing to confirm my prayerful desire, I asked: 'Truly, shall we all suffer?'
>
> But he assured me once again: 'You are threatened by bloodshed and the sword. But what I would like to know,' he said, 'is this: Will all of you who despise this life receive equally the reward of heavenly gifts without distinction?'

'I am not capable,' I replied, 'of passing judgement on so weighty a matter. Lift your eyes for a moment,' I said, 'to heaven, and you will see a countless host of flashing stars. Does every star shine with the glory of equal light? And yet all share the same light.'

In his probing way he still found a further question to ask. 'If there is some distinction,' he said, 'which of you are higher in meriting the goodwill of your Lord?'

'As a matter of fact,' I said, 'there are two who are superior to the rest, but their names may not be told to you and are known only to God.'

Finally when he began to press more sharply and to be more annoying with his questions, I told him: 'Those whose victory is slower and with greater difficulty, these receive the more glorious crown. Hence it has been written: *It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven*.'[10]

Christian audiences will doubtless have been cheered by the way Aemilian overcame (as he must) his brother's assaults on the faith. But again on an objective view what really emerges in this exchange is a pitiful illustration of how the new cult had driven a wedge between two men who were no longer able to maintain the fraternal bond that was their birthright. In Roman ideology the bond between brothers was very close indeed, despite the allowance that had to be made for the fratricidal legacy of Rome's founder, providing a model, it has been said, for all sorts of other social relationships: the relationships for instance between friends or soldiers or even lovers. In another Christian document, the *Acts of Phileas* (B 8.1), the bond can still be seen in the early fourth century to be of vital importance when an advocate in court makes a desperate attempt to save his contumacious Christian brother from execution. In Aemilian's case, however, the potential for the Christian cult to become a divisive, disruptive force in the family is inescapably clear, for in its uncompromising rigidity and exclusiveness it has separated men who shared from birth a natural bond. The evidence is no more than that of a dream, but it is a dream that Christian audiences were thought capable of accepting as realistic in its demonstration of Aemilian's superior Christian dialectic. It reveals now an unfortunate social reality.[11]

Aemilian's brother, it should be noted in passing, is introduced in the *Martyrdom of Marian and James* as Aemilian's *frater … carnalis*. (8.2: 'brother in the flesh'), an ironic label to say the least. The appropriation of family language to signify brotherhood in Christ was so pervasive in early Christianity, as the martyrdom accounts themselves amply reveal, that real family connections could become obscured, with the consequence that a biological brotherly bond such as the one here had to be glossed for purposes of basic communication. (Another example appears in the *Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas* [7.5], a document to which I shall return.) In a

small but telling way, the phrase reveals how for some the new, artificial Christian family was coming to supersede the natural family. Christian 'brothers' could live together in *societas* and share *domestici affectus*, and the Christian community could see itself characterized by *concordia*, *pax*, and *unanimitas*, as the martyr acts make clear. Some might have thought under such conditions that traditional configurations of family values were becoming obsolete.[12]

III

The date of the martyrdom of the Greek woman Agathonicê at Pergamum is disputed: if not in the second century then perhaps during the Decian persecution of 250/1. The event is reported in two accounts of the trials and deaths of other Christian martyrs named Carpus and Papylus, one version, the earlier, written in Greek, the other in Latin. The accounts differ appreciably. In the Greek version Agathonicê throws herself onto the stake and immolates herself as an act of solidarity when Carpus and Papylus have been tried and are about to be burned, while in the Latin account Agathonicê is tried and condemned by a Roman proconsul independently of the trials of other martyrs. In the Greek version her death is spontaneous, in the Latin more calculated. Redactors tampered with the Greek version, it has been thought, wishing to expunge from the record any notion of a voluntary martyrdom.[13]

The significant point for present purposes is that in both versions Agathonicê is advised before she dies to take pity on her children, to consider, in effect, what will become of her offspring if she dies. She has a son in the Greek version and children, in the plural, in the Latin version. The intent of those offering the advice was evidently to deter Agathonicê from ending her life by appealing to the fate of her children and her responsibility as a mother to look to their well-being. In the Greek version, the crowd attending the proconsul's hearing, once aware of Agathonicê's intention to kill herself, shout out: 'Have pity on your son' (A 43), and in the Latin version both the crowd and the proconsul urge her to the same end: 'While the crowd cried out to her: "Have pity on yourself and on your children," the proconsul said: "Look to yourself; have pity on yourself and on your children, as the crowd cries"' (B 6.2). The obvious implication is that a mother's first responsibility was to care for her offspring and to place their interests above her own – this is the behaviour that would prevail in normal circumstances – but in her response Agathonicê shows how the Christian mother, from her Christian point of view, can easily reject conventional norms and abandon her children with a clear conscience. Her son, she says in the Greek version, 'has God who

can take pity on him; for he has providence over all' (A 44); while in the Latin account she says, 'My children have God, who watches over them' (B 6.3). The result was that because of her Christian devotion Agathonicê left her offspring to fend for themselves, and so forfeited all claim to the title of responsible mother in conventional terms. (No details are provided of a father or other relatives.) In the Greek version of her death, when, following the deaths of Carpus and Papylus, Agathonicê has a vision of 'the glory of the Lord' (A 42) and immediately destroys herself, martyrdom appears as a contagious, impetuous force that overwhelms everything in its path, family bonds included. In the Latin version martyrdom is equally catastrophic, but here it is more disturbing still since Agathonicê's death and abandonment of her children depend no longer on the compelling, irresistible example of others, but on her own cool-headed calculations before the proconsul. Whichever version is the more accurate, Agathonicê emerges in either case as an unnatural mother whose actions to the non-Christian majority are incomprehensible. To Christians, frighteningly, she is an example of courage and commitment.[14]

A coda to Agathonicê's history, comparably upsetting to my mind, is found in the *Martyrdom of Marian and James* (13.1–2), the mid-third century record of executions in North Africa already mentioned. Marian's mother is the crucial figure here. Appearing in the narrative only in its final stage when Marian the *lector* has died, she displays an almost pathological fascination with his corpse and, amazingly, reacts to his death with joy: 'When this was all over, Marian's mother, now sure of her son once his passion was finished, rejoiced like the mother of the Maccabees, congratulating not only Marian but also herself that she had borne such a son. In the body of her son she embraced the glory of her own womb; again and again with religious devotion she pressed her lips to the wounds of his neck.' Now in the demographic regime that prevailed in Roman antiquity, the untimely loss of a child was a commonplace event that any parent, regardless of social status, might reasonably anticipate. Responses on the part of adults varied. At one extreme an excess of grief might pour forth, the reaction of Cicero to the death of his adult daughter Tullia providing the classic illustration. At the opposite extreme philosophers might urge, and presumably some parents adopt, an attitude of indifference to the loss of the young. It is impossible therefore to speak in terms of a single, all-embracing response: the variables are too many. But while, in view of the specific cultural conditions that obtained in the Roman past, reactions as a whole are bound to have differed from those of parents in societies where child mortality is a relative rarity, positive *rejoicing* in the loss of a child was not a response that figures prominently in the Roman historical record. From a conventional standpoint, it follows,

the response of Marian's mother was an altogether strange phenomenon, attributable to the dissemination of a theological construct postulating the martyr's immediate translation to another world (Heaven). It signalled a complete inversion of the traditional norms of family life, and marked the appearance of a radically new Christian family ethic. In a comparable case from North Africa of the late third century, a certain Fabius Victor is seen making no attempt to dissuade his twenty-one-year-old son Maximilian from pursuing the martyr's crown by refusing to serve in the Roman army; and when, on a proconsul's order, Maximilian had been executed, Victor, it was said, 'returned to his home in great joy, giving thanks to God that he had sent ahead such a gift to the Lord, since he himself was soon to follow.' To the non-Christian majority, one imagines, such joy must have seemed utterly bizarre. Likewise, the mother of a mid-third-century martyr, the deacon Flavian, who visited her son, her only son, in prison as he awaited execution and found herself saddened because his end had been postponed, can surely have elicited little sympathy from the people of Carthage, the city where these events took place.[15]

Whether Christians determined to give their lives for the faith had family members to take into consideration was a question regularly posed by Roman administrators seeking a way to avoid handing down capital sentences. Papylus, one of the martyrs associated with Agathonicê, was asked, for instance, when he appeared before the proconsul of Asia in Pergamum whether he had any children. Irenaeus, the bishop of Sirmium in Pannonia who died in the early fourth century, was likewise asked whether he had a wife, children, or other kin by Probus, the governor who tried him – Probus knew that the answer was yes because he had seen them at a previous hearing – and Phileas, the bishop of Thmuis in Egypt, who was executed in Alexandria at more or less the same time, was asked at his trial by his judge Culcianus about the claims on his conscience of his wife and children. The recurrent question presupposes, well into the late imperial age, the centrality in ordinary social life of family relationships, the primacy of those relationships over all other claims on the individual, and a special valuation of children. In repeatedly asking the question, Roman officials appealed to the most fundamental of human bonds that society knew in their attempts to prevent unnecessary deaths.[16]

The responses of the individuals concerned are notable. That of Carpus was sophistical. He played to the governor's conventional sensibilities by saying that, indeed, he had many children; but he meant 'children' who were his spiritual progeny not his biological children, and so with Christian stubbornness, and perhaps even arrogance, turned the question against his questioner.[17]

The case of the bishop Irenaeus is more disturbing. While being tortured, following his first interrogation by the provincial governor, Irenaeus was visited by relatives (*parentes*) who upon seeing him immediately tried to persuade him to apostasize: 'His children kissed his feet and begged, "Father, have pity on yourself and on us!" Then [his wife] urged him to yield, weeping for his youth and good looks. He was hard pressed by the weeping and mourning of all his relatives, the groans of his servants, the wailing of neighbours, and the crying of his friends.' Irenaeus, however, did not break: his resolve to die a martyr's death remained unaffected. Subsequently the governor interrogated him a second time, and this was when he asked the question about the claims on Irenaeus's conscience of his wife and children. At first Irenaeus denied their very existence, an enormously revealing response in its own right, and when the governor reminded him that he knew of Irenaeus's family, he quoted the verse from the Gospel of Matthew on which his denial was based: 'He who loves his father or his mother or his children or his brethren or his family more than me, is not worthy of me.' Unless a complete fabrication, there could be no clearer indication of the impact of Jesus' teaching on the familial lives of his followers than what is reported in the final stages of the narrative: first, 'looking to God in the heavens and bearing in mind his promises and despising all else, Irenaeus insisted that he neither had nor knew any other kin'; and then, after the governor's last appeal to sacrifice to the Roman gods for the sake of his children, Irenaeus echoed the words of Agathonicê: 'My sons have the same God as I do. He can save them.'[18]

From a traditional Roman point of view, Irenaeus's position is astonishing. In place of the model of the *pater* who devotes himself to his children, regarding it as a life-long obligation to cater to their well-being, Irenaeus presents a new Christian model of social comportment that under the threat of eternal damnation demands of the father that he put self-interest above all other claims, and that he renounce all responsibility for those who would normally be dependent upon him. The standard model of paternal behaviour has been turned completely on its head under the psychological pressure exercised on the believer, in all its terror, by the concept of an afterlife of punishment. In this example the human results were devastating: a wife left without a husband, sons left without a father, and havoc wreaked in all their lives by the decision of the *pater* alone. How widely replicated in the cities of the Roman empire the model was it is impossible to say. But the new paradigm closed off the opportunity for fathers to emulate Roman paragons from the distant past such as Aemilius Paullus, who could be remembered as 'the lovingest of fathers,' or Fabius Maximus, who could be remembered as 'a wise man and a good father.' The Christian asserting that 'Christ is our

true father' and 'our faith in him is our mother,' as Hierax the companion in death of Justin Martyr did, embodied in his overwhelming desire to win a martyr's crown the Christian revolution in social psychology, as a consequence of which earthly ties could, and sometimes did, become meaningless. The young widow Eutychia, who was tried at Thessalonica in the spring of 304, was prepared to die a martyr's death as a 'slave of God' with no thought at all impinging on her conscience for the child she was carrying. In the event, and in accordance with Roman law, she was spared because of her pregnancy.[19]

Phileas's history only serves to confirm these conclusions. His reply to the question was essentially the same as that of Irenaeus: the higher claim of God took precedence over the claims of wife and children, and Scripture permitted no doubt: 'You shall love the Lord your God, who made you.' When during his interrogation the judge Culcianus observed that his wife was looking at him, as if that by itself should have been enough to impel him to sacrifice in the Roman manner, Phileas, full of the death wish, answered with words that from a non-Christian viewpoint seem callous and uncaring: 'The Lord Jesus Christ is the redeemer of the souls of us all. It is he whom I serve in chains. And he who has called me to the inheritance of his glory can also call her.' A wider circle of relatives (*propinqui*), together with the court officials, then entreated Phileas to have regard for his wife and children, embracing his feet in their appeal that he show *respectus uxoris* and *cura liberorum* ('regard for his wife,' 'concern for his children'). Those phrases capture traditional ideas very well, and indicate their continuing vibrancy in late imperial society. They recall too the ironic image of the martyr Blandina, a slave woman who exhorted her fellow martyrs, 'like a noble mother encouraging her children,' when she was put to death at Lugdunum under Marcus Aurelius – a clear hint perhaps of a constant tension between the old ideals and the new prescriptions. In Phileas's case, however, the attractions of martyrdom altogether erased the old ideals from the picture, and once more the martyr chose to leave his wife a widow and his children fatherless in order to satisfy an individualistic goal inspired by obsessive Christian faith. There is no sign in the record of a crisis of conscience over the choice before him, of regret or remorse, and Phileas's final response to his relatives' entreaties was singularly heartless: 'He rejected what they said, claiming that the apostles and the martyrs were his kin.' The natural family was once again abandoned in favour of the newly constituted Christian family united not by blood but by belief, with human consequences scarcely fathomable. Perhaps, therefore, the loss of a complete family to martyrdom, as happened in the case of Quartillosa, her husband and son, who within

days of one another were executed at Carthage in the mid-third century, was not the tragedy it would have been for non-Christians.[20]

IV

The familial conflicts and disruptions that Christianity could generate are best illustrated in the most famous, and most complex, of the martyrological sources, the *Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas*. This document records the martyrdom of a number of Christians at Carthage in the early third century, principally of course that of the prosperous young mother Perpetua. Much has been written about her. But the familial tragedies her story contains deserve to be highlighted, for Perpetua's history reveals more clearly than anything seen so far the terrible collision between traditional and non-traditional systems of family ethics to which Christian beliefs, fortified by a human recalcitrance born of what can only be called fanaticism, gave rise.[21]

Perpetua was a well-born, well-educated young provincial woman from Thurburbo, whose family history is known in considerable detail. At the time of her trial she is said to have been about twenty-two (perhaps twenty-one in modern terms), her father and mother were still living, as was a maternal aunt, and she had two more or less grown-up brothers. A third brother had died in childhood from disease at the age of seven. Perpetua was, or had been, married, though notoriously the *Martyrdom* makes no mention of her husband, the father of the infant son who was still at her breast. It is difficult to imagine that the slaves Felicitas and Revocatus, two of Perpetua's fellow catechumens and martyrs, were anything but slaves from her or her father's household, though this cannot be certain. In many ways the family group seems to have been typically Roman, or typically Romano-African – a family perhaps socially and culturally comparable to that into which Apuleius had married half a century earlier when he became the husband of the widow Aemilia Pudentilla of Oea. A connection of a certain kind has indeed been posited between Perpetua and Apuleius, the notion, based on certain phrases that appear in the portion of the *Martyrdom* that derives from the journal Perpetua kept while in confinement, that Perpetua had read Apuleius's great novel, the *Metamorphoses*. Though plausible, the idea cannot be admitted as fact. Perpetua's judge was the procurator P. Aelius Hilarianus, a man of equestrian rank originally from Aphrodisias who found himself in office as temporary governor when the proconsul Minucius Opimianus died. Dedications known from inscriptional evidence suggest that he was a man of traditionalist sympathies in matters of religion, and perhaps unlikely therefore to be well disposed to the Christians he tried.[22]

The dominant family member in the *Passion* is Perpetua's father, and it is of some significance that the record of their relationship comes not from a third party account but, again, from the journal that Perpetua herself composed while in confinement. In the past, Perpetua makes clear, her father had been an exemplary parent. He had raised his daughter with his own hands and had, perhaps unusually, favoured Perpetua over her brothers. During her ordeal, moreover, the devotion he displayed to her is evident throughout her descriptions of their several encounters, so that his love for her can scarcely be doubted. In order to save her life he constantly took the initiative and tried to persuade her to recant, the first attempt – motivated, as she says, by the affection he felt for her (*pro sua affectione*) – occurring after Perpetua's initial arrest. Her stubborn refusal to accede to his wishes, however, bordered on effrontery and upset traditional expectations of social comportment. The refusal provoked in the father a violent reaction, the product perhaps of frustration at a *pater*'s unforeseen and unpredictable inability any longer to dictate a course of action to his daughter and fear of the consequences he knew her recalcitrance would bring.[23]

Perpetua's father cannot have shared his daughter's religious convictions. That seems obvious from the polar positions represented in the record of their first encounter. It is a view confirmed by an inference from their second meeting, when Perpetua remarked that her father alone among her relatives would not rejoice in her suffering. This must mean that he alone in the family was unable to identify with her desire for martyrdom because he alone did not share her faith. One of her brothers was certainly a Christian because he is identified as a catechumen. But the suspicion must be that well before Perpetua's detention, Christianity had come between her parents (as it did in the case of the anonymous divorcing couple at Rome seen earlier), as well as between father and children, and had created a long, if now lost, history of family conflict and dissension. Once the new faith had been partially embraced within a family, secrecy and caution were at times required with regard to those who remained outside, for the unconverted could become objects of mistrust and possible sources of danger, 'worse than our enemies,' as a later martyr said in reference to the Christian need to conceal sacred literature.[24]

In the second encounter, with Perpetua imprisoned but not yet tried, her father, worn out with worry but driven by familial *pietas*, tried to persuade his daughter to recant by appealing to her sense of obligation to the other members of her family: to himself, her mother and brothers (evidently under no threat themselves), and also to her infant son, 'who,' the father said, 'will not be able to live' if his mother were to die. It was an appeal to the well-being of the extensive kin circle in general and to the very survival

of Perpetua's newborn child in particular. It can scarcely have been lost on Perpetua, either at the moment itself or when she later recorded it, that her commitment to her faith would jeopardize her family as a whole and leave her son motherless. The choice before her was straightforward, and it was faith over family that she chose.[25]

The next meeting took place in the forum of Carthage when Perpetua was on trial. Again she rejected family ties. She describes two significant moments. First, just as she was about to be asked about her religious allegiance, Perpetua's father appeared on the spot with her infant son, seized her from the step of the platform on which she was standing, and said: 'Perform the sacrifice – have pity on your baby!' Both at that instant and when she recorded the details later, Perpetua could again hardly have failed to realize that her refusal to sacrifice to the gods of Rome meant sacrificing the infant to whom she had recently given birth. But Perpetua made no reply to her father. Second, the procurator Hilarianus, her judge, then appealed to Perpetua to have pity on her father and her son, expressing in his injunctions, once again, the fundamental importance that society normally attached to family ties: 'Have pity on your father's grey head; have pity on your infant son. Offer the sacrifice for the welfare of the emperors.' Once more the familial ramifications of her decision must have been patently obvious to her, but Perpetua simply, and immediately, replied that she would not sacrifice. Instead, she adamantly professed her faith, which led, as Hilarianus continued to importune her, to the procurator's order that her father was to be flogged. The result was that a man of status was visited with physical abuse and humiliation of a servile sort from which his child would customarily have been expected to save him. Perpetua indeed felt sorrow for her father's misfortune, as though she had been beaten herself, and sorrow for his wretched old age; but her Christian resolve to put self above all others precluded any practical intervention.[26]

The fourth and final encounter came shortly before Perpetua's execution. Several days had elapsed since her conviction. Her father was now, as she described it, beside himself (*consumptus taedio*): 'He started tearing the hairs from his beard and threw them on the ground; he then threw himself on the ground and began to curse his old age and to say such words as would move all creation.' But apart from again expressing sorrow for his old age, Perpetua remained unmoved. The traditional notion that it was her duty to support her father in his old age did not register with her, her fixation with death leaving no room for the Roman familial idioms of centuries past. For all the father's devotion, therefore, tragedy in Perpetua's family could not be averted: parents lost a child, brothers their sister, an aunt her niece, an infant son his mother. What happened to the family in the long term is unknown,

but the turmoil that Christian intransigence produced at one precise moment presumably had lasting effects.[27]

Nothing in Perpetua's tragic history is more affecting than the fate of her infant son. Perpetua's anxious concern for her child is self-evident in the early stages of her account: nursing the infant herself (there is no sign of a *nutrix*), she agonizes over him in prison until she is given permission to keep him with her. After sentencing, however, when the child no longer needs the breast and Perpetua is free from the physical discomfort of breastfeeding, her anxious concern seems to vanish as she awaits her fate and writes of the child no further. It cannot be said that Perpetua had been indifferent to him; but a constant concern for the child is not in evidence, and her decision to die a martyr's death brought Perpetua to a point where she was prepared to abandon her child as if she were a parent exposing an unwanted infant – the difference in this case being, as Perpetua knew, that reclamation of the child had already taken place: he is last heard of in the protective custody of his grandfather. Comfort, moreover, was found in attributing the child's lack of need for nursing and her own physical relief to the will of God, which no doubt made the act of abandonment all the easier to undertake. Refuge in the will of God can cover a multitude of sins.[28]

Perpetua's child is not the only infant to appear in the *Martyrdom*. At the time of her arrest the slave Felicitas, the other principal character in the record, was in the late stages of pregnancy and gave birth to a daughter before she was put to death. Her fellow slave Revocatus was perhaps the child's father. The lowly status of slave parents did not mean that family life was any less important to them than to their social superiors: evidence of the importance slaves attached to family ties is abundant and incontrovertible. What is remarkable here, however, is Felicitas's belief before her delivery that, because it was illegal to execute a pregnant woman, her hope of Heaven would be unduly delayed: 'As the day of the spectacle drew near she was very distressed that her martyrdom would be postponed because of her pregnancy; for it is against the law for women with child to be executed.' In Felicitas's Christian view of the world, her child's birth was inconsequential in comparison with the anticipated glory of martyrdom, a view that once more illustrates how Christian ideology could bring about a total inversion of the natural order. When her child was born prematurely it was of course a miracle, an answer to prayer from her fellow prisoners that allowed her execution to proceed on schedule. The infant girl, virtually orphaned at birth, was entrusted to a Christian woman who, naturally enough, was a 'sister.' Thus it was that the mother went to her death, *rejoicing* 'that she had safely given birth so that now she could fight the beasts, going from one blood

bath to another, from the midwife to the gladiator, ready to wash after childbirth in a second baptism.' A greater perversion of nature it is difficult to imagine.[29]

V

Christian martyrs were punished, as were many other convicted criminals, by being exposed to wild beasts, by being burned alive, by crucifixion, or by simple decapitation. Yet whatever the mode of execution, martyrdom was almost always a public event, played out before an audience of interested onlookers who can be presumed to have had an appetite for the macabre and a taste for the element of spectacle that Roman capital sentences involved. How much the onlookers knew of the individual circumstances of those being punished before them it is impossible to know. But some, perhaps many, will also have been present at the trials preceding the executions and thus were in a position to inform others in the audience of what they had observed. Trials conducted before Roman provincial governors were to some degree public events, held in the open air or in no more than partially enclosed buildings. People were able to see and listen to the dispensation of Roman justice in progress as much as they wished. The crowd of onlookers was in fact a stock element in the process of a Roman public trial as conceived by rhetorical theorists, and advocates could use it to their advantage. The *Acts of the Christian Martyrs* assume that crowds of spectators regularly attended the trials of the Christians and, as certain details noted earlier indicate, at times even participated in the proceedings. Clusters of local residents, therefore, in Carthage, Pergamum, Rome, and all the other cities where Roman justice was meted out, were continually observing and hearing the actions and words the Christians performed and spoke. What did they learn about the martyrs, and what were they able to communicate to their peers who filled the theatres and amphitheatres to witness, and to be entertained by, the execution of the Christian criminals?[30]

The answer, I suggest, is that they saw evidence of a religious cult working as a highly destructive instrument of social change, promoting discord and divisiveness, setting wife against husband, brother against brother, daughter against father. They saw evidence of a cult that encouraged older mothers to rejoice in the untimely deaths of their adult sons and that told younger mothers to forsake their infant children for the sake of an immediate death which brought some strange personal reward. They saw Christians placing the interests of the individual far above the interests of the family, championing as a result an ethic completely at variance with traditional family

values. They saw in other words what Celsus saw: a threat to the established order. Punishment consequently made sense: it promised to remove the threat and to restore a state of moral normality.[31]

In some respects, as is well known, Christian teachings created a potential for improving social change: insistence on the availability of salvation to all, regardless of status, theoretically opened the way to the elimination of conventional social barriers, particularly those associated with the worst of all social conditions, slavery. As far as slavery is concerned, however, the potential was never realized. Martyrdom gave free and slave an equal opportunity to die together, as the *matrona* Perpetua and the *conserua* Felicitas did, but that can hardly be called a gain. Christian bishops such as Irenaeus in Pannonia did not contest the habit of owning human flesh, nor did lesser members of the Christian community, which made it easily possible for people like Euelpistus, one of the martyred companions of Justin Martyr, and Blandina and her fellow Gallic martyr Sanctus to go to their deaths as slaves. Christians were even prepared to own non-Christian slaves, despite the danger of being betrayed to the authorities by those they possessed. They might on occasion attempt to intercede on behalf of Christian slaves owned by non-Christians: this happened in the case of the slave woman Sabina, the companion of the presbyter Pionius, who was martyred at Smyrna in the mid-third century. Sabina's pagan mistress Politta had expelled Sabina from her household, in bonds, in an effort to make the woman renounce her Christian beliefs. Alone in the mountains Sabina was helped by co-religionists who tried to free her from her shackles and to claim her freedom from her mistress. But such actions did not develop into an assault on the institution of slavery per se, which never became the problem for early Christians that it was to become in later history. The case can in fact be made that early Christianity made the condition of slavery worse.[32]

In a comparable way, the evidence of the martyr acts suggests as far as family history is concerned that Christian teachings likewise failed to foster social improvement. The stories of the martyrs and their glorious deaths were repeatedly told and retold to Christian congregations as ways of confirming the faithful in their faith and strengthening the communities to which they belonged. But the stories also had the effect of placing models of behaviour before their audiences that favoured self-interest over communal obligations to kin, and these were models intended for emulation by those who encountered them. To this extent, while Christianity certainly made a difference, the change it encouraged was regressive: change for the worse, not for the better.

The exemplary character of the *Acts of the Christian Martyrs* cannot be missed. It is made explicit in the *Martyrdom of Perpetua* (1.1–2; 21.11)

and the *Martyrdom of Montanus and Lucius* (1; 23.7; cf. 16.4), where the terms of reference recall the didactic traditions of Roman historiography. What emulative effect the *Acts* had, however, who can say? The familial consequences of martyrdom as I have described them may well have been more evident to early Christians than the records suggest at face value, as patent in the past as they are to the modern observer. So perhaps there were not really all that many among the ordinary Christian congregations who were prepared to give up everything for the faith as the martyrs themselves did. The effect of the martyrologies may simply have been to increase among contemporary audiences the aura of heroism enveloping those who had made the ultimate declaration of belief. Certainly the injunctions of the household-code tradition presuppose that some, perhaps most, Christians neither desired nor foresaw any essential change in the general familial organization of society, and the family of course never died out.[33]

Nonetheless, as ideas spread of renouncing sexual activity, of cultivating chastity, of living in monastic seclusion, of setting alongside the biological family the 'family' of the faithful, a challenge to the old communal ethic of Roman family life must surely, if gradually, have arisen from a mode of thought, individualistic and inward-looking, far different in character. As W.H. Auden put it: 'The more fanatic and tactless among them were quite prepared, for the sake of saving a soul, to wreck marriages and encourage children to disobey their parents.' The development is one manifestation of how Christianity eventually came to transform classical civilization, and in a small but telling way the *Acts of the Christian Martyrs* illuminate the process of historical change in the second and third centuries that the rise of Christianity dictated. In celebrating martyrs as heroes, Christian congregations tacitly, and complicitly, endorsed the notion that the faithful *ought* to be prepared to sacrifice everything for the cause, their kin included, if that was what was demanded of them. That was enough indeed to shake the foundations of society. To those therefore like Celsus who were not of the elect there was every reason to feel alarmed. Apuleius may have been one of them. The threat to traditional family life that Christians stood for was far too noticeable in this era of change for any educated figure with an interest in religious customs and activities to miss.[34]

Endnote

On the basis of certain putative correspondences between the text of Perpetua's journal in the *Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas* and Apuleius, *Metamorphoses* (exclusively from *Met*. 10), Dronke (1984: 285–6 n. 58)

cautiously suggested that Perpetua before she became a Christian had read Apuleius's novel. He states:

> Especially in Apuleius' amphitheatre episode (X 29ff) I am struck by such expressions as 'dies … muneri destinatus' (cf. *Passio* VII 9), on which the woman criminal had been 'condemned to the beasts' ('quam dixi propter multiforme scelus bestiis esse damnatam,' X 34; cf. *Passio* X 5 'ad bestias damnatam esse'). In this context in Apuleius there also occur the relatively rare words 'flexuosus' (X 29, though used of dance-movements, not of paths, as in *Passio* X 3) and 'adtonitus' (X 35), used, as in Perpetua (X 5) to evoke the rapt absorption of spectators.

The similarities of expression may be reconsidered.

1. The only words that appear in Apul. *Met*. 10.29 (*dies ecce muneri destinatus aderat*) and *Martyrdom* 7.9 are *dies* and *munus*: *et experrecta sum, et cognoui fratrem meum laborare. sed fidebam me profuturam labori eius et orabam pro eo omnibus diebus quousque transiuimus in carcerem castrensem. munere enim castrensi eramus pugnaturi; natale tunc Getae Caesari*. Apart from the fact that *dies* and *munus* are very common words, there is no similarity of usage or contextual correspondence in the two passages.

2. Similarity of expression is close between Apul. *Met*. 10.34 and *Martyrdom* 10.5 with the phrases *bestiis esse damnatam* and *ad bestias damnatam esse*. But the phrase 'to condemn to the beasts' is such a common technical term, appearing in a multiplicity of authors and legal texts, that to claim influence of one passage over the other is far from obvious.

3. Of *flexuosus* at Apul. *Met*. 10. 29, Zimmerman (2000: 364) remarks: '*Flexuosus* ("winding") is said of rivers or roads; cf. 9.11 … *propellor ad incurua spatia flexuosi canalis*.' She notes that its 'use to describe the dancers who are turning around in varying circles' is 'unusual.' On *Met*. 9.11 the Groningen commentators (Hijmans et al. 1995: 110) report: '*flexuosi*: Apul. employs the word in one other passage: 10.29 …, where it refers to a circular dance movement. This fairly infrequent adjective occurs only in prose authors, and is first attested in Cato, *Agr*. 33,1. Its frequency picks up after Apuleius; see e.g. Mar. Vict. *Gramm*. 6,60,3 *intortum et flexuosum iter labyrinthi*.' There is consequently no obvious justification for thinking that *Martyrdom* 10.3, *aspera loca et flexuosa*, was influenced by Apuleius.

4. On *attonita* at Apul. *Met*. 10.35 and *adtonitum* at *Martyrdom* 10.5, it is enough to quote Amat 1966: 223–4: 'L'adjectif exprime *souvent* une attente anxieuse' (my emphasis), with reference to Sen. *Ep*. 72.8; 118.3 (*omnes attoniti uocem praeconis exspectant*); Tert. *Fug*. 1; *Idol*. 24; *Spect*. 23.1. Again, therefore, there is no need to think in terms of correspondence with Apuleius.

As stated in the text, it is plausible, if not attractive, to believe that Perpetua had read the *Metamorphoses*. But the material above renders unlikely the idea that Perpetua's journal was influenced by her memory of *Met*. 11 (Dronke 1984: 14: 'It may even be [Apuleius's] heady account of the mysteries of Isis and Osiris that had shown the adolescent Perpetua how great a force to overcome was that Egypt of the mind' [in reference to the Egyptian of *Martyrdom* 10]).

7

Apuleius and Carthage

They came from Birmingham, which is not a place to promise much, you know, Mr. Weston. One has not great hopes from Birmingham.

Jane Austen, *Emma*

After his trial at Sabratha, Apuleius of Madauros appears to have settled in the city of Carthage. There, chiefly it seems in the decade of the 160s, he delivered a series of public speeches which now are known from a collection of twenty-three highly coloured extracts preserved under the title of *Florida*. My purpose in this essay is to examine this collection, or rather the original speeches the collection represents, in its historical North African and especially Carthaginian context, in an effort to promote understanding of the singularity of Apuleius as a figure in the Latin literary tradition.[1]

Critics and commentators conventionally regard Apuleius the Latin author, especially the author of the *Metamorphoses*, as a link in a literary chain that extends in a more or less undeviating line from the early third century BC to the Antonine age and beyond, a tendency that has the effect, in my view, of obscuring a true distinctiveness that derives from the particular historical conditions that moulded and formed Apuleius, and against which his life and activities as a cultural figure can be assessed. Elementary statements of the 'facts' of Apuleius's life are commonly provided in scholarly studies, and a sensitivity to a North African milieu can sometimes display itself in them. But what these facts mean is a question that seems hardly ever to be raised comprehensively, and often no more than a minimal connection is made with the discussions and analyses of Apuleius's writings offered. Further, historical material beyond the elementary can often be overlooked.[2]

Apuleius was born in Madauros about 125 and was educated as a child in Carthage. Both cities belonged to a region of the Roman empire in which

the language of governance was Latin, and in which many other aspects of Roman culture were on display. After his childhood education in Carthage, Apuleius travelled widely throughout the Mediterranean and spent several years of his early adulthood studying in Athens and Rome. By the time of his trial in Sabratha, when he was in his early thirties, he had become a man of wide philosophical and literary learning – what Greeks called *paideia*, but what Apuleius in his Latinate idiom termed *doctrina* – as the *Apology*, the published version of the speech of defence he gave at his trial, makes clear. Before the proconsul Claudius Maximus, Apuleius accounted for the accusations brought against him by giving rational explanations of his behaviour that on several occasions allowed him to quote from, paraphrase, or refer to works of the Plato he regarded as his master – the *Symposium*, *Timaeus*, *Parmenides*, and *Phaedrus* among others – and to introduce at will any number of allusions to purely literary authors, from Homer to Hadrian.[3]

The *doctrina* with which the years of travel and study had filled Apuleius is as evident in the *Florida* as it is in the *Apology*, and there can be no doubt that Apuleius came to know the Latin literary tradition thoroughly. The consequence of categorizing him as a mainstream figure in the Latin literary tradition is easily comprehensible, even more so when the influence of the Second Sophistic is introduced, that feature of imperial Greek history so difficult to define, but which is perhaps most easily understood through its practitioners: itinerant Greek orators whose habit it was to give speeches in the cities of the Roman empire of the high imperial age, often *ex tempore*, demonstrating their erudition on the one hand and attempting to recapture the purity of classical Attic diction on the other. They were the purveyors of epideictic who in large part people the pages of Philostratus's *Lives of the Sophists*. Notably, Apuleius does not appear in Philostratus's work, but his quotation of ancient Roman poets in the *Apology* and the *Florida* illustrates, it can be thought, a widespread contemporary taste for archaism that allows him to be styled a Latin sophist.[4]

An alternative view will be offered here: to the effect that when considered not in philological isolation but rather in their socio-cultural setting, the extracts of speeches that constitute the *Florida* and the *doctrina* they display allow a step to be taken towards understanding Apuleius as a product, and symbol, of the complex and competing historical forces at work in North Africa of the Antonine age. In concentrating on the Carthage of the *Florida*, I shall propose that Apuleius was first and foremost a Romano-African engaged in and with a local culture in constant flux, and that the speeches represented by the *Florida* were by definition signs of a cultural fluidity that can be historically recovered and that Apuleius himself embodied.

It is the recovery of this context, especially the recovery of the details of place, that I consider all-important. In the historical record of the cities of Roman Africa, Roman and Latinate forms naturally predominate. But there were other elements that need to be taken into account as well when evaluating Apuleius and his works, the *Apology* and *Florida* especially. To give one simple example: anyone in the second century who visited the great theatre in Lepcis Magna could see that its sponsor, Annobal Tapapius Rufus, son of Himilcho Tapapius, had been commemorated in the Augustan era with a Latin inscription of a typical sort – except that the inscription was not typical at all because it was incised bilingually in Punic as well as Latin and could still be read by Punic speakers in the second century. It stands to this day as a permanent reminder that the culture of Roman Tripolitania in the Antonine age, as that of Roman Africa at large, was not altogether that of the metropolis.[5]

I

The excerpts that make up the *Florida* vary in length from a few words to several pages in modern printed editions. They also vary in subject matter, from learned, pithy anecdotes through descriptions of wondrous sights and places to celebrations of the representatives in North Africa of Roman imperial rule. What unity they possess comes from their 'florid' sparkle, that is all. To illustrate their character, I describe and comment briefly on three examples.

First, in the fifty lines or so of *Florida* 7, Apuleius invokes the majestic figure of Alexander and explains that because the king wanted his painted and sculpted images to be rendered as faithfully as possible, he once ordained that only the three most celebrated artists of his day, Polycletus, Apelles, and Pyrgoteles, might portray him. The anecdote is turned to a pointed end when Apuleius expresses the wish that philosophy could likewise be controlled by royal edict, so that it would be practised only by the learned few and not the pretentious many. The true image of philosophy was not to be debased.[6]

What the extract means is not altogether obvious. It has plausibly been said to have topical significance and to indicate a round in an ongoing contest between Apuleius and certain of his personal rivals to eloquence and learning. Two points, however, seem reasonably clear. First, although Alexander was a subject of interest to Greek sophists of the Antonine age, Apuleius's anecdote is indebted to a passage composed a century or so earlier by the elder Pliny in his *Natural History* (7.125). In recounting the story, therefore, Apuleius did not necessarily associate himself with sophistic tradition.

Second, in his remarks on philosophy (*sapientia*), Apuleius makes a claim for pursuing with it both the art of fine speaking (*bene dicendum*) and the art of living well (*bene uiuendum*): the three are bound inextricably together. His claim in other words is to be able to instruct his audience in the pursuit of the good life. That capacity depends on his erudition, as represented by the story about Alexander, and on his consummate public speaking, as represented by his spoken words. He is the educator of those who hear him, an exemplar of intellectual and moral authority.[7]

In the thirty-five lines of *Florida* 12, next, Apuleius offers a brilliant description of a brilliant bird, the Indian parrot, carefully dwelling on the bird's green plumage, the scarlet ring around its neck, and the bird's ability to use its hard beak as a kind of anchor when landing from flight. He also tells how the bird can be taught to speak, if young and of the right kind (parrots are not all the same: some, for instance, have more toes than others). But Apuleius points out that the parrot can only say what it has been trained to say, no matter that the bird sounds like a human being. If therefore the parrot knows how to curse, it will curse incessantly unless its tongue is cut out, or unless returned to the forest from which it first came.

The point of the extract is again difficult to determine. Commentators suggest here also the topical idea of an assault on oratorical competitors, or else hypothesize a prelude to remarks on the subject of education. The point is made, too, that Greek sophists of the imperial age conventionally took the parrot as a subject for speech making: Dio Chrysostom produced a now lost encomium of the parrot, according to Philostratus (*VS* 1.7), and Aelian described the bird in his *De natura animalium* (13.18–19). In the end, therefore, Apuleius seems to do no more than produce a Latin version of a hackneyed sophistic theme. At first reading, perhaps, the extract might be thought to refer to a relatively rare sight and with its careful description be meant to impress a North African audience with first-hand knowledge of something exotic Apuleius had gained from his eastern travels. Justin Martyr's contemporary reflections on Indian exoticism in the *Dialogue with Trypho* might provide a parallel. That tempting impression, however, is dispelled by the discovery that again much of Apuleius's text depends on Pliny's *Natural History* (10.117), which in turn also means that here too an exclusive sophistic hold on the parrot, or Apuleius, is improbable.[8]

Finally, in *Florida* 15 Apuleius describes the island of Samos, its size, location, and economy, paints a verbal picture of a statue to be seen there at the temple of Hera, and concentrates on the intellectual biography of its most celebrated son, the first philosopher Pythagoras. The details given of Pythagoras's life are not unique – comparable content appears, for instance,

in Diogenes Laertius (8.1–50) – but the details communicate a sense of mysterious association with distant lands and peoples few in Apuleius's audience might be expected to have known directly. Among Pythagoras's teachers, Apuleius says, had been the Brahmans of India, who had taught him almost everything he knew: 'what mantras there are for the mind, what yogas for the body, how many parts to the soul, how many stages of life; and what tortures or rewards (according to what they deserve) await the spirits of the dead.' The priests of Egypt had taught him 'about the amazing powers invoked in their rituals, the wonderful properties of numbers, and the most ingenious geometrical theorems.' The Chaldeans had taught Pythagoras about astrology and its impact on human life; and a contribution had also been made by the *magi*, particularly Zoroaster, who is described as 'the high priest of all divine mysteries.'[9]

Apuleius's purpose in this case evidently was to demonstrate his knowledge of the wider Mediterranean world and to illustrate the intellectual, if largely legendary, pedigree of Pythagoras. An interest in philosophical lives and artistic description might also again be attributed to contemporary sophistic influence. In a manner which perhaps aroused some local suspicion, however, by connecting himself with the founder of all philosophy in the statement that his master Plato had 'Pythagorized,' Apuleius the *philosophus* in a sense associated himself here with the mysteries surrounding Pythagoras, the clandestine mysteries of the Persian *magi* included (*Flor.* 15.26): the term *magi* after all was ambiguous, conjuring up images not simply of teachers of Persian wisdom, but more immediately, as Apuleius knew better than most, of cheap tricksters, quacks, and charlatans who played on and catered to the gullibility of the masses. Its significance in everyday life at the local level was perhaps rather different from the usage of canonical Latin poets. In Carthage of the 160s some may have recollected that it was to Egypt, the land of magic par excellence, that Apuleius was travelling when he broke his journey at Oea in Tripolitania and soon afterwards married the widow Pudentilla.[10]

It is clear from these examples that the contents of the *Florida* can sometimes be traced to earlier literary sources and that Apuleius's presentations sometimes align him, though not incontestably or exclusively, with contemporary Greek sophistry. This is the valuable product of the technique of literary archaeology. To concentrate on this method alone, however, leaves other sources of knowledge untapped. Consider for instance *Florida* 6, where Apuleius, again drawing on the exotic, expatiates on the marvels of far distant India and tells of mutually deathly battles between giant snakes and elephants (*Flor.* 6.4–5): 'For the snakes get them in their slippery coils and bind them, so that when the elephants cannot free their legs, or in any

way break out of the scaly fetters of the tenacious serpents, they must seek revenge through the collapse of their own mass, and crush their holders with their whole bodies' (*quippe lubrico uolumine indepti reuinciunt, ut illis expedire gressum nequeuntibus uel omnino abrumpere tenacissimorum serpentium squameas pedicas necesse sit ultionem a ruina molis suae petere ac retentores suos toto corpore oblidere*). Once more in a confection that might at first raise thoughts about autopsy, there turns out to be another huge debt to the elder Pliny, who in the *Natural History* (8.32–4) included a passage on contests between elephants and monster snakes very similar to that of Apuleius. Yet is it enough to observe the direct linguistic correlation between the two texts without noticing at the same time that contests of this kind could be portrayed in African ornamental mosaics that Apuleius might have seen for himself, as an example now in the Carthage Museum enticingly suggests, and asking how influential such images might have been when Apuleius produced his speech? The item in question shows, on one description, 'an enormous python coiled around the body of a huge elephant, biting it on the belly,' while 'the acute suffering of the pachyderm, who is rapidly losing blood, is conveyed by the painful expression shown on the animal's face as well as by the convulsions of its body.' Why should material items of this type, from a particular place, not be considered of some significance for understanding an author from the same region, together with items in the literary tradition?[11]

II

Specificity of place in the *Florida* is suggested in a number of ways. First, there is the overshadowing presence of the proconsul of Africa, the immediate human symbol in Carthage of Roman law and order, who arrived in the city each spring to begin his year of office, and who might expect when he departed to receive a sympathetic expression of provincial gratitude for his beneficent rule. Apuleius (*Flor*. 9; 17) gives the names of two individuals whose virtues he himself extolled in encomiastic speeches at the conclusion of their terms: Sex. Cocceius Severianus Honorinus (*cos. suff.* 147, *procos.* 162/3) and Servius Cornelius Scipio Salvidienus Orfitus (*cos. ord.* 149, *procos.* 163/4). These grand personages were towering, even intimidating figures – the earlier proconsul Marius Priscus will not have been forgotten – highly visible as they rendered judgments from their tribunals in legal and administrative disputes, not only in Carthage, but, through the medium of the all-important assize tour, throughout the province. Apuleius clearly alludes (*Flor*. 9.37) to their duties, which could take them to such cities as Utica, Thysdrus, Hadrumentum, Sabratha, Theveste, and Hippo. When

absent from Carthage, the governors could rely on a cohort of troops in the main centre to keep the peace.[12]

Then there are civic and provincial institutions. First, the local form of government, patterned on the government of the Roman Republic with annual magistrates and a body of decurions voting, among other matters, on the disposition of honorific statues to men of eminence like Apuleius. Second, the cult of the emperor, for which priests had to be designated. Third, the provincial assembly of civic delegates from across Africa Proconsularis. Apuleius's speeches contain references to all these items, the effect of which is to communicate a sense of a close bond between metropolis and colony. This tie was reinforced in the real, everyday life of Carthage by the collection and transportation to the chief city of the proverbially rich harvests of grain its hinterland supplied, an operation of mammoth scale that consumed vast numbers of men and their labour, especially that of the *saccarii* who packed the grain into sacks and loaded them one by one onto the transport vessels bound for Italy.[13]

Evidence of this kind helps focus attention on Apuleius's original speeches as acts performed in an identifiable location, and one, moreover, which had a perceptibly Roman aspect. The lead given by *Florida* 18 in this respect is especially compelling. This speech-extract is the record of an address to the people of Carthage in which Apuleius, characteristically presenting himself as a *philosophus* as he had in the *Apology* (*Flor* 18.1), told stories about Pythagoras and Thales and announced the singing of a hymn he had composed in Greek and Latin to Aesculapius complete with introductory dialogue. What is important for present purposes is that the text shows where the speech was delivered:

Praeterea in auditorio hoc genus spectari debet non pauimenti marmoratio nec proscaenii contabulatio nec scaenae columnatio, sed nec culminum eminentia nec lacunarium refulgentia nec sedilium circumferentia, nec quod hic alias mimus halucinatur, comoedus sermocinatur, tragoedus uociferatur, funerepus periclitatur, praestigiator furatur, histrio gesticulatur ceterique omnes ludiones ostentant populo quod cuiusque artis est, sed istis omnibus supersessis nihil amplius spectari debet quam conuenientium ratio et dicentis oratio.

Moreover, in an auditorium of this kind, what ought to be looked at is not the marbling of the paving, nor the flooring of the proscenium, nor the pillaring of the stage, nor the eminence of the roof, nor the brilliance of the panelled ceiling, nor the expanse of the seating, nor the fact that here at times the mime hallucinates, the comedian prates, the tragedian debates, the rope-walker moves into jeopardy, the juggler engages in thievery, the pantomime deals in dactylogy, and all the other players show

their tricks to the people. But these things aside, nothing else ought to be looked at more closely than the enthusiasm of the audience and the vocalism of the speaker. (*Flor*. 18.3–5)

The 'auditorium of this kind' is the theatre of Carthage, in whose restored remains artistic performances are still given today, a compact, even comfortable physical structure about which much is known and in which Apuleius's original performance can be firmly situated. The theatre was in place by the middle of the second century, and was constructed to a Vitruvian design. It may well have been very new when Apuleius spoke there. It was located in the north-eastern section of the city, built into a hillside above the remains of a Punic burial ground. It had a seating capacity of about 11,000 and was a richly decorated structure, just one of the two known North African theatres to have had a complete, Proconnesian, marble facade. At the top of the steeply graded *cauea* there was probably a colonnaded portico of green marble, while the orchestra, about 35 metres in diameter, was paved with white marble. The *proscaenium* was decorated with frescoes, and the *scaenae frons* probably had a three-storey colonnade above a podium. Various architectural elements within the theatre suggest the work of masons from Asia Minor, while the free-standing sculptures still extant imply when the theatre was in its original form a lavish number of statues to civic benefactors, members of the imperial family, and the gods of the traditional Greco-Roman pantheon. Apuleius's hymn might suggest that a statue of Aesculapius should be included. The main point, however, is that Apuleius's verbal description of a magnificent public building is consistent with the archaeological record and allows the precise place in which his speech was given to be visualized. It becomes possible consequently to understand some of the circumstances of the original performance, and even perhaps to grasp something of the event itself.[14]

The reference to the theatre of Carthage opens up, then, a rather different world from that in which the search for parallels and intertexts in textual sources is of sole importance. Together with other references to public buildings, a senate house (*Flor*. 16.35; 18.8), and library (*Flor*. 18.8), it draws attention to the physical appearance of Carthage as a whole in the 160s, and to other results of archaeological excavation and reconstruction.

In the later second century, Carthage was a spectacular example of Roman imperial expansion, immense in size, and an impressive testament to Roman urban planning. Its centre lay on the summit of the Byrsa, the acropolis of the old Punic city, from where the city fell away into four quarters, each of which contained a number of city blocks of equal dimensions linked by spacious thoroughfares. The design had been implemented under Caesar

and, especially, Augustus, when the city was refounded as a Roman colony a century or so after its destruction at the close of the Punic Wars. The symmetry of the plan reflected a profound knowledge of the traditions of Roman urban development and was interrupted only to the north-west, perhaps out of concern for the divisions of land made or proposed in the wake of the much earlier Gracchan colonial scheme. It had begun its new life with an infusion of 3000 settlers, who joined local Africans to form a population of some 30,000, a number which by the early third century was to increase substantially. In Apuleius's day, the long struggle against Rome for control of the western Mediterranean that had once preoccupied the city was ancient history, and few can have been concerned that Carthage had in that distant past been laid under a Roman curse.[15]

The Byrsa was a particularly spectacular feature. At the time of the colonial foundation the Romans had levelled the hilltop to create a massive, steeply elevated platform some 30,000 square metres in size, on which was placed a cluster of quintessentially Roman buildings: a vast, dominating colonnaded forum, a grand judicial basilica, and two great temples, one most likely a Capitolium, the other perhaps intended as a centre for the imperial cult. The Roman character of the complex could hardly be doubted. But this was not all. Anyone surveying the city in the later second century would have been struck by two other monumental Roman features apart from the theatre: a circus in the south-western corner and an amphitheatre to the west. Exactly how the circus looked in Apuleius's day is uncertain, because it went through various stages of development. From the beginning, however, it was a huge structure, with room to seat between 60,000 and 75,000 spectators, eventually second in size only to the Circus Maximus in Rome. The amphitheatre in its grandest form had a facade of fifty or more arches rising in six tiers, its arcades decorated with statues, while inside three banks of seats reached up to a crowning colonnade, allowing accommodation for about 30,000 people. Carthage was well on its way in the 160s to be the second ranking city in the empire it claimed to be by the end of the century.[16]

The archaeological record makes clear that the appearance of the Roman colony changed considerably from the time of its foundation through the third century, as public buildings were redeveloped or added anew. In the reign of Antoninus Pius, notably, an extensive building program was undertaken about 150 after a fire had destroyed the forum, which included the construction of a new basilica of distinctive design on the Byrsa (the emperor is said to have provided the funds); and at about the same time on the water's edge below, the colossal Antonine Baths were begun, a complex larger than any other in the western empire outside Rome. It was not completed until the time of Marcus and Lucius. Carthage's harbour was also developed by

Antoninus Pius, who indeed has been thought in the attention he gave to Carthage at large to have seen himself, with Virgil's allusion in the *Aeneid* (1.418–40) to the rebuilding of Carthage in the Augustan era in mind, as fulfilling the dutiful role of Ascanius to the Aeneas of Hadrian. However that may be, the renovation of old and the building of new structures that were all predictable architectural constituents of a provincial Roman city imply a consciousness on the part of Carthage's inhabitants, Apuleius included, that the Roman character of their city was always evolving, that it was by no means fixed or final. And the physical development of the Roman landscape was in fact symbolic of the extension of Roman idioms and ideology at large on a site where, a century and a half earlier, Rome had forcibly and uncompromisingly imposed itself from without. A Roman temple in a conquered land after all could easily be acknowledged by men at the core of empire as a sign of distant Roman dominance. The public monuments of Carthage, as expressions in architecture of Roman power, show how Rome's colonial presence was always locally asserting and reasserting itself; but the monuments were also sites for human activity and interaction, and from this perspective the amphitheatre and circus are of special interest.[17]

At some point in the 130s, a display of gladiatorial and wild beast fighting was put on in the amphitheatre that lasted for four days. The animals were African panthers. The donor of the games was Q. Voltedius Optatus Aurelianus, a successful Carthaginian of equestrian rank, a local politician and priest who financed the games in return for his tenure of the resplendent office of *duumuir quinquennalis*. The cost was extraordinary, more than HS200,000, one of the highest such outlays on record. But if exceptional in extravagance the event was conventional: gladiators regularly fought in the Carthaginian amphitheatre, as did convicted criminals from the lower classes and those intransigent dissidents the Christians styled 'martyrs.' All were exposed to wild animals as a legitimate form of execution. In turn, men like Voltedius decorated their houses with mosaics graphically memorializing the grisly contests they had promoted as tokens of their wealth, status, and civic generosity.[18]

To another Carthaginian, the Christian Tertullian, the amphitheatre was a centre of cruelty and savagery, where both criminals and the innocent might be sacrificed to the public appetite for human blood – a place where a man scarcely able in normal circumstances to look at a body dead from natural causes revelled in the sight of a corpse bloodied and mangled, where spectators urged gladiators to kill as soon as opportunity allowed, and called for the bodies of the victims to be revealed to detailed scrutiny (*Spect*. 19). Tertullian tried to convince his Christian audience, a generation after Apuleius, of the idolatrous nature of the amphitheatre's activities. Those activities, however,

were far too deeply embedded in local culture to be shaken by one man's tirades. They were 'our games,' as Apuleius himself – a regular visitor, one might imagine – said in a significantly proprietary phrase (*Flor*. 4.4, *munera nostra*). Likewise with the circus, which also aroused Tertullian's scorn (*Spect*. 16; 20–1). This too was a place of insane frenzy, which when spectators lost all trace of reason converted the crowd assembled there into a mob, or else a place of rank corruption, where a man usually the model of decorum could be seen exposing himself without compunction. Tertullian believed that the prime cause of such depravity was a blind addiction to the races and the gambling that accompanied them, a passion that destroyed all social conventions. Yet again as the vivid scenes of charioteering in ornamental mosaics unmistakably show, circus activities were not affected by Christian strictures of the kind Tertullian propagated.[19]

The degree of popular interest in the circus and amphitheatre is well illustrated by the *defixiones* with which Carthaginians sought, in secret, to inflict harm on their favourite competitors' rivals. In language as violent and horrific as the contests themselves, men and women summoned divine and magical powers of all descriptions against gladiators and charioteers in their desire to induce calamity: 'Bind their hands, take away their victory, their exit, their sight, so that they are unable to see their rival charioteers, but rather snatch them up from their chariots and twist them to the ground so that they fall, dragged all over the hippodrome, especially at the turning points, with damage to their body.' A terracotta plaque in Vienna shows a circus scene in which a four-horse chariot has crashed, close to the turning point as it happens, with its driver falling as an attendant tries to control one of the panicking horses and a second figure holds his head in dismay. The sight was doubtless common in Carthage, and how often connected to the summoning of chthonic deities with names now impossible to pronounce is an intriguing question. But belief that the gods could cause the charioteers and their horses any number of misfortunes was strong. Carthaginian enthusiasm for the games might be detected in the imposing magnificence of statues of charioteers that still fortuitously come to light.[20]

To those who lived in their presence, the Carthaginian circus and amphitheatre disclosed that extreme competitiveness that was a hallmark of Roman culture. Like trials before a provincial governor or elections for decurial office, the entertainments on display were by definition contests in which there was victory for some and defeat for others, but no middle ground or compromise. The contestants themselves experienced success or failure most immediately. But spectators were closely implicated, attaching themselves to teams of charioteers or individual gladiatorial stars on whom they staked their hopes of profit – the arena saw as much gambling as the

circus – and meeting with elation or disappointment as the gods dictated. The contests were symbols of how success was achieved in Roman life, and of how all resources possible had to be deployed in its pursuit, the clandestine and the other-worldly included. People flocked to see them.

III

The gods of magic Carthaginians summoned for the games with their *defixiones* were of various origins, Egyptian, Greek, Jewish, and many others. For all the evidence therefore of Rome's physical and ideological presence in second-century Carthage, the *defixiones* point to another aspect of contemporary life, the city's cultural heterogeneity. Carthage, that is to say, was not a simple replica of Rome, no matter how cosmopolitan Rome itself might be, but a city with an entirely distinctive character in which North African influences were as prominent as those of the capital. These influences are obscured in the literary record by the disproportionate survival of Latinate elements and forms, and this is the essential reason why Apuleius can be so easily claimed for an undifferentiated Latin literary tradition. There are at least two ways, however, in which the importance of these influences can be understood and the imbalance of evidence redressed. They suggest again that Carthage was a city subject to constant cultural change and adaptation.

First, Carthaginian religious life in the second century was highly complex and variegated. The gods of Rome were everywhere, naturally enough, brought by the first colonists and still pre-eminent in the life of the civic community in Apuleius's day. Apart from the Capitoline triad and the deified emperors who were accommodated on the Byrsa, other Roman deities were simultaneously afforded their due: Ceres (hardly a surprise in view of Carthage's role in supplying Rome with grain), the Magna Mater, Aesculapius, Liber Pater, and many more. It is important to remember, however, that these deities were imported gods, and that beneath the cult they received there were sometimes Punic forms which had not at all lost their significance. The two most notable deities in the Carthaginian pantheon were Caelestis and Saturn, each of whom, despite a Latinate name, was associated with a Punic deity long dominant in local life before the establishment of the Roman colony, Caelestis with Tanit and Saturn with Baal Hammon. The Punic population did not quickly abandon traditional ways of conceptualizing and venerating them. In the case of Tanit especially there is strong circumstantial evidence that worship remained largely the same over a long period of time despite the introduction of the name of Caelestis, and as late as Augustine's day (*De ciu. D.* 2.26; cf. 2.4), her sanctuary in the city was attracting droves of devotees, men and women alike, who assembled to observe

and relish rituals before the statue of the virgin goddess that combined prayers with theatrical depictions of sexually explicit acts. The puritanical Augustine found them shocking, but the significant point is that the cult was still full of vigour. Generations of Carthaginians beforehand had presumably found its practices normal and enjoyable. Indeed, Apuleius himself can be presumed to have known Tanit's Carthaginian sanctuary – the goddess of the lofty citadel makes a cameo appearance in the *Metamorphoses* (6.4) – and when he labelled himself a follower of Aesculapius and a worshipper of all the gods of Carthage (*Flor.* 18.36), he may well have thought in terms of Eshmoun and other Punic divinities as much as of their Roman counterparts. The point is that the introduction to Carthage of Roman gods was an act signifying change to which a response on the part of the Punic population had to be made. And a Punic inscription honouring Baal from a man whose fragmentary name was inscribed in Latin is a convenient illustration of one kind of response, evidence of how to local Carthaginians the Punic gods retained their own identities, even as Roman culture established itself. The cultural flow, moreover, was not necessarily all in one direction. The suggestion has been made that certain Roman gods began in the second century to assume African aspects as an increasingly Africanized ruling elite conflated local religious traditions with those of the first settlers' gods. The cult of Ceres may have been affected by that of the African Cereres, whose priests were men of substance, and the cult of Aesculapius perhaps by that of Eshmoun.[21]

Second, when the contents of the *Florida* are studied in isolation, it is easy to lose sight of the fact that throughout the whole of Apuleius's lifetime, and well into late antiquity, the first language of much of the population of Africa Proconsularis was Punic, not Latin. Sporadic literary items, such as Apuleius's remark in the *Apology* (98.8) that his stepson Sicinius Pudens spoke only Punic and knew no Latin at all, are indication enough. Especially significant, however, is the evidence of bilingual Punic and Latin funerary and honorific inscriptions which reflect the continuing use of Punic as a living language in the high imperial age, with continuous interaction between Punic and Latin. At first Punic and Latin idioms and formulae existed side by side, but as Roman influence gradually exerted itself, Punic imitation of Latin formulae and syntactic interference became more evident, together with borrowing, rather than translating, of Roman official terminology. Similarly, Africans gradually came to replace Punic with Roman forms of their names (Annobal Tapapius Rufus, the builder of the theatre at Lepcis, is an obvious early example), though the originals remain recognizable enough. In addition, some three hundred different Libyan names that survived the impact of both Punic and Roman influence appear in the

Latin inscriptions of Roman Africa, adding further to the overall cultural mix. What emerges linguistically, therefore, is that Carthage was part of a region characterized by cultural fluidity in which Roman forms, inserted wedge-like by an intrusive power, uninterruptedly and often perhaps imperceptibly interacted and reacted with pre-existing local forms to produce an ever-changing cultural tapestry.[22]

The appearance and growth of Roman cultural forms in conquered regions of the Mediterranean world have long been regarded by historians as elements of a unidirectional process called Romanization. Traditionally, the superiority of Roman over indigenous cultural forms has been taken for granted, and nothing but a welcoming acceptance of Roman civilization assumed on the part of those on whom it was imposed, their collaborating leaders in particular. In a post-colonial generation, however, as evidence of cultural blending and local survivals has become better understood, this mode of thought has given way to models of historical development in which concepts of accommodation, acculturation, adaptation, assimilation, negotiation, and resistance have become common currency, so that the very idea of 'Romanization' has become a subject of intense debate. Here a fixed theoretical position is unnecessary. All that needs to be done is to affirm the simple point, seen now from several perspectives, that Roman Carthage in the second century was a community whose cultural identity was far from one-dimensional or static. But this in my view is a crucial point for understanding the speeches Apuleius delivered there, as represented by the *Florida*.[23]

IV

Whether Apuleius's speeches were all given in Carthage is beyond knowledge. There is no evidence that Apuleius left the province after his trial, but other African cities may have heard him speak. Carthage, however, was the certain site of several performances if not most, and it was a city that claimed his special devotion, drawing on one occasion an accolade that still carries a dramatic charge: 'Carthage, the respected teacher of our province; Carthage, the heavenly Muse of Africa; Carthage, the inspiration of those who wear the toga' (*Flor*. 20.10: *Carthago prouinciae nostrae magistra uenerabilis, Carthago Africae Musa caelestis, Carthago Camena togatorum*). When addressing his listeners there, Apuleius consistently styled himself a *philosophus (Flor*. 16.25, 29; 18.1) not a *sophista*, a term he reserved for the sophists of classical Greece alone. Quotations from a plethora of poets decorated his delivery. The words of Accius, Lucilius, Plautus, and particularly Virgil are still in evidence, not always accurately reproduced – perhaps

because of imperfect memory at the time of recital or even faulty work on the part of the stenographers who took down what he said – but in evidence nonetheless. Apuleius's speeches, however, were not lengthy discourses on complex philosophical topics, but as the earlier summaries suggest, exhibitions of an accessible and lightly offered learning which sometimes had a moralistic flavour, the learning (*doctrina*) frequently taking the form of extended anecdotes about eminent individuals from Greek history and myth.[24]

The list of subjects covered, some sensational, others amusing, all absorbing, includes Hyagnis the father and teacher of Marsyas and the latter's horrific contest with Apollo (*Flor*. 3); the piper Antigenidas, who was distressed that the musicians who worked for undertakers were also called pipers (*Flor*. 4); Hippias the sophist, who appeared at the Olympic games in elegant clothes he had made himself (*Flor*. 9); Crates the Cynic, who abandoned material wealth but still attracted the beautiful Hipparche in marriage (*Flor*. 14); the comic poet Philemon, who like Apuleius himself on one occasion was interrupted in recital by a shower of rain (*Flor*. 16); the sophist Protagoras, who once found himself outwitted by his pupil Euathlus (*Flor*. 18); the discoverer of scientific wonders Thales of Miletus (*Flor*. 18); and the doctor Asclepiades of Prusa, who was remembered for having brought back to life a man apparently dead (*Flor*. 19). It is easy to see in these anecdotes the author of the *uariae fabulae* of the *Metamorphoses* (1.1): with their bravura effects and contrivances, the speeches were a form of lively entertainment intended to capture and captivate Apuleius's audience; and once captivated its members might dwell on various thoughtful themes (or moral lessons) the speeches expressed: the paradox that in assessing character, hearing is more important than seeing (*Flor*. 2); the notion that foolish arrogance can be cruelly punished (*Flor.* 3); the importance of social responsibility (*Flor.* 6, even if the morally inadequate, like unsuccessful farmers, are compelled to steal from those more fortunate [*Flor.* 11]); the importance of pursuing the golden mean (*Flor*. 15), of remembering that good fortune is no guarantee of unbridled contentment (*Flor*. 18), that elevated rank is no protection against the misfortune of ravaging disease (*Flor*. 23). The audience might also cast around as it listened to the speaker to glance at portraits of the individuals about whom they were hearing, or at least recollect images with which they were familiar. Marsyas, who as surveyor of the heavens was a symbol of Romanity as well as of barbarism through his contest with Apollo, was a popular sculptural subject, Apollo himself was everywhere, and so too the portraits of Greek philosophers. The learned orator might introduce Orpheus and Arion through a quotation from Virgil (*Flor.* 17.15), but his listeners were more likely to know the 'tamer of savage beasts' and the 'charmer of tender-hearted monsters' (*ille immanium bestiarum delenitor,*

hic misericordium beluarum oblectator) through representations in the decorative arts by which they were surrounded. Learning from books was not the sole source of knowledge.[25]

Who, or what, was Apuleius's audience? The question is not often asked or considered in detail. It is an attractive assumption that the parade of Apuleian *doctrina* was meant for members of a Carthaginian elite who were as well educated as Apuleius himself and shared his high-minded tastes, and certainly there were occasions when he addressed dignitaries such as proconsuls, other Roman senators, and the *principes Africae uiri* (local magistrate or members of the provincial *concilium*?). Their type can be recognized in the epitaphs of men from the cities of Roman Africa who were remembered for having dedicated themselves to literature and eloquence, figures such as the orator C. Julius Proculus, who was celebrated at Mactar for bringing the delights of learning (*studia*) to public audiences, clad in his toga, and M. Dalmatius Urbanus, commemorated at Sitifis for his fine speaking and knowledge of literature and the liberal arts, in both Latin and Greek. When Apuleius spoke to a full audience in the theatre, however, such people can have made up only a fraction of the possible 11,000 present – the 'immensity of the audience' as he once rhetorically put it (*Flor*. 18.2, *pro magnitudine frequentiae*). Even if allowance is made for the families of dignitaries and visitors from other cities, it seems inescapable that many of those who made up his audience must always have been the relatively uneducated, if not illiterate, laity of Carthage, humble men and women who were probably in the first instance mainly Punic speakers. The seating conventions of the Roman theatre naturally required the presence of a cross-section of society.[26]

Traces of such a broader audience are detectable in the *Florida*. Its members may have included, for instance, craftsmen to whom allusions to 'the file and the rule' and the 'products of the lathe' (*Flor*. 9.8: *ad limam et lineam certam, cum torno*) meant something, and those who used the shuttle, awl, file, and lathe to make clothes and sell them in their shops (*Flor.* 9.25–7). They were residents perhaps of an area of Carthage that has been identified archaeologically as an artisans' quarter. The audience members may have included also peasants who laboured in unproductive fields (*Flor*. 11), or more successful cultivators and farm workers skilled in viticulture, tree grafting, gold panning, breaking horses, taming bulls, shearing, and pasturing sheep and goats (*Flor*. 6.8). They may have included lowly travellers who had to interrupt their pressing journeys with social obligations when encountering men of greater estate (*Flor*. 21), ships' helmsmen (*Flor*. 23), proconsuls' heralds (*Flor*. 9.6), sculptors (*Flor.* 16.46), porters and shopkeepers (*Flor.* 7.13), those who sold the toiletries of the bath in the marketplace (*Flor.* 9.26). As with the lowly figures in Apuleius's portrait of provincial

society in the *Metamorphoses*, the social types Apuleius introduced in his speeches were surely drawn from real life, not figures merely of rhetorical flourish. They are the sort of people who can again, I suggest, be seen in the mosaics of Roman North Africa, of many types and occupations: men who plough the fields with oxen, or else sow seed, harvest grain, beat olive trees, and gather up their crops; men who collect grapes and trample out the vintage, goatherds milking goats, shepherds stabling their flocks at the end of the day. There are shipowners and shippers transporting grain to Rome, fishermen with their nets, traps, and lines, men raising horses for the circus, and the personal servants who served in the households of the elite (many surely slaves): the maidservants who assisted their grand mistresses in the toilette, the valets who accompanied their masters when they travelled or pursued the chase.[27]

Apuleius's audience must in other words have comprised to a large extent the working population of Carthage and its environs, even perhaps at times the *saccarii*, and his speeches have to be regarded as a form of mass popular entertainment comparable to that provided by the other performers he situates in the theatre with the *philosophus*: the mime and the pantomime, the tightrope walker and the juggler, the comic actor and the tragedian (*Flor.* 18.4). The philosopher, the mime, the tightrope walker, and the comic actor were indeed natural companions (*Flor.* 5.2). With all their rhetorical sparkle, Apuleius's speeches offered another Roman alternative to the attractions of the circus and the amphitheatre, and an equally competitive, if not quite so violent, alternative at that. Apuleius certainly had rivals and detractors at Carthage – he refers to them (*Flor.* 9.1) – who together fought for the prize of the populace's favour, a favour which eventually translated itself into acclaim of the type that produced a public statue for the orator and so immortalized him. No mean competitor, it seems, Apuleius was awarded several such statues, at Oea and Carthage, and also at his birthplace Madauros. His rivalries, however, if not incompatible with a sophistic context, should preferably be situated in a much broader ethos of competitiveness that assumed many forms in Roman Carthage.[28]

When seen, moreover, as dramatic acts performed before a large and diverse audience in a culturally differentiated setting, Apuleius's speeches can be understood not only as vehicles of entertainment, but as active transmitters of metropolitan literary culture to a provincial population under constant exposure to new forms of Roman influence. Like the monumental buildings that periodically altered the physical landscape, the speeches were agents of historical change, elements of the process of cultural admixture and interaction that typified Carthaginian life, as apparent in the interrelationships between the local pantheon and the gods of Rome and the Punic

and Latin languages. They can be seen, that is to say, as dynamic manifestations of how *Romanitas* made itself felt in Punic Carthage, and as markers of a society that was always having to respond to the arrival in its midst of what was in essence the intrusive and the alien. The issue was still alive a generation later when Tertullian composed the *De pallio*.[29]

On this view, Apuleius the speechmaker becomes in his own person a symbol of historical change. In the first instance, he was not an alien intruder but a Romano-African who left and then returned to the region of his birth, having acquired from many years of study in distant places, as noted earlier, the learning of the socially privileged. He assimilated and came to identify with the dominant intellectual tradition, to enter the 'aristocracy of the intellect' in one telling phrase, and subsequently disseminated his learning in the land from which he had sprung. But the expectation could not necessarily have been high that a man from Madauros would come to play this role.[30]

V

To imagine the young Apuleius in his place of birth is to compel awareness of the cultural as well as geographical distance he travelled in making himself a man of Greek and Latin letters. It also makes the 'transmissive' quality of the speeches represented by the *Florida* easier to grasp. Madauros is worth attention.

The town was situated on the southern limit of the grain belt that ran south and west of Carthage in the high plateau country where Africa Proconsularis shaded into Numidia, well shielded from the sea. The closest port, Hippo Regius, lay some 95 kilometres to the north-west, with Carthage roughly 250 kilometres to the north-east. It had become a Roman colony under the Flavians, when veteran troops were settled on a site whose history went back at least to the age of Syphax, its official name being Colonia Flavia Augusta Veteranorum Madaurensium. It was one of many new foundations of the late first century intended to mark the advance of Roman power in North Africa further and further to the west. Physically the colony was organized in conventional Roman style, with a grid pattern of streets focusing on a forum almost square in disposition. The forum itself was surrounded by the standard signs of Roman urban design – porticoes, basilicas, sanctuaries, and mausolea – which were likewise the tokens of a community's reputation. There was also a council chamber for the governing body of decurions, and by the time of the Severans public baths and a theatre too, the latter the gift of the civic benefactor M. Gabinius Sabinus. At some stage there must also have been educational facilities at

Madauros: centuries later Augustine spent part of his early life there studying grammar and rhetoric.[31]

The Latin inscriptions of Madauros allow an impression to form of the Roman ethos that prevailed in the town in Apuleius's time, an ethos that was superficially the same as that which prevailed in innumerable other Roman towns of the western empire. They confirm, for example, that Madauros was governed by decurions and *duumuiri*, and that local citizens used the *tria nomina* of Roman citizens everywhere, many bearing names like that of M. Cornelius Victorinus, a man who held the chief magistracy of Madauros on two occasions and who was publicly honoured by a grateful population for once having relieved a shortage of grain. They show that individuals commemorated family members at the time of their death in customary Roman fashion, recording the exact lifespan of the deceased with suitable expressions of family feeling and loss; that citizens made dedications to such members of the Roman pantheon as Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva, Mars, Mercury, and Venus; and that religious cult was led by a profusion of men who bore the standard Roman titles of *sacerdos* and *flamen*. The inscriptions indicate, too, that over time the status and wealth of some families increased to such a degree that their members styled themselves equestrians, and claimed thereby a place among the imperial elite. Others perhaps even aspired to senatorial status, seeking the support of men in the capital who served as the town's patrons to further their individual ambitions.[32]

Apuleius came from a wealthy family, within Madauran society probably an extraordinarily wealthy family. At his death his father left an estate of HS2 million, which was enough to provide Apuleius and his brother with the minimum census requirement for entry to the Roman senate. His father, as might be surmised, belonged to the decurial order and held public offices, including that of *duumuir*. He might well have anticipated that his sons would one day promote the family fortunes in the political society of Rome itself, for the pattern had long been established that the descendants of provincial settlers should in time enter the ranks of Rome's governing class. The town of Cirta, not far away to the west, had already provided consuls well before the end of the first century.[33]

There was much of Rome in Madauros, therefore, for the young Apuleius to absorb. But there were equally other aspects of Madauran life which could not be missed. First, Madauros was a very small community. It occupied only twenty hectares or so of land, and although connected to other communities, it did not lie on a major road and was not a major commercial centre. Its public buildings were all comparatively small – some of the most impressive, the theatre for instance, did not even exist when Apuleius was born – and its population can never have been very large: the theatre had a seating capacity

of just 1200. Second, the colony had been imposed on a frontier region that had vibrant traditions of its own which, as at Carthage, never fully disappeared. Many of its citizens had names as superficially Roman as that of C. Apuleius Rogatus (conceivably a relative), but there were also those such as L. Julius Zabo, Manilius Aris, and Mizguar son of Baric, men of African descent who apparently had no wish at all to conceal their local origins even as they acquired the trappings of Roman life. Men such as Rogatus, moreover, were not necessarily the descendants of Italian settlers, as might at first be thought: some of Madauros's first settlers were Africans, and studies of nomenclature indicate that large numbers of its Roman citizens, men with *nomina* taken from emperors or senators who had served in Africa, were citizens of native descent. On one calculation, almost three quarters (71%) of Madauros's attested civic magistrates came from families of African origin. The complex process of change is illustrated by the Roman-appearing Severus known from a Neo-Punic inscription on a stele found not far away from Madauros: he was the son of a father with the Punic name of Birikba'al and the grandson of a grandfather with the Libyan name Masgaran. It should not be surprising, therefore, that, again as at Carthage, Punic was a language heard in Madauros as much as, or more than, Latin. The presence of Libyan speakers has also to be observed. Moreover, if Roman gods were worshipped in the town, so too were Damio and Lilleus, gods of (apparent) local extraction, while the cult of Liber Pater, the civilizing god of life and death, of light and darkness, involved Hellenistic Dionysiac mystery elements that were built on the foundation of the ancient cult of Punic Shadrapa, as throughout Roman North Africa at large.[34]

Madauros had been established as part of a Roman strategy to control the Musulamii, a nomadic tribe which brought distress to Rome on several occasions in the first century, notably in the reign of Tiberius. The strategy was successful. The nomads were surrounded by new foundations and subsequently policed by Roman troops. But the conjunction of cultures that Roman penetration created could not be lost on those who populated the Roman enclaves. At his trial in Sabratha, Apuleius informed Claudius Maximus (*Apol.* 24.1) that his birthplace lay on the borders of Numidia and Gaetulia, and that he had once described himself in a speech as half-Numidian and half-Gaetulian, vocabulary which implies that he was well aware of how his *patria* had come into being: 'Gaetulian' was a generic nomadic designation that included the Musulamii. He could seem to take pride in the fact that Madauros had once been ruled by African kings, Massinissa as well as Syphax, men whose names conjured up a romantic picture of a remote past when African power had been an equal match for that of Rome. Yet he also observed (*Apol.* 24.3) that compared to his character a man's

place of birth was of no importance – a platitude certainly but one perhaps betraying consciousness of what were in reality obscure origins, and hinting at a social scar that could never be completely removed. From the very heart of the imperial court, M. Cornelius Fronto had similarly written that he was 'a Libyan of the Libyan nomads' (*Ep. Graec.* 1.5). Madauros in the second century, it appears, was little more than a backwater in which Roman and native mingled closely together.[35]

VI

Apuleius's African origins serve as a reminder of the tribally based social organization that was still much in evidence in the North Africa of his era, and of the military efforts Rome constantly had to make to subdue and restrain indigenous peoples. The contrast between the unsettled and dangerous world of the frontier zone and the world of sophisticated knowledge visible in the *Florida* is sharp. But the two worlds cannot be kept apart, and that is the essential point I want to make. The speeches which are now read as the *Florida* were in themselves historical events intimately tied to other historical developments in the North African setting in which they were delivered, and it is in this specificity of place and in the dimensions of place – geographical, physical, material, linguistic, religious, ethnic, social, economic, and political – that their author's singularity begins to emerge. Apuleius was the product of a culturally complex environment who came in his maturity to add to the process of historical change in North Africa by transmitting in his own person elements of a dominant philosophical and literary idiom to a local African population. Entertaining and instructing Carthaginian crowds with easily digestible portions of *doctrina*, and displaying an enthusiasm for metropolitan *studia* reminiscent a generation earlier of the younger Pliny, he contributed through his speeches, rather unpredictably, to the ever-evolving process by which the seeds of *Romanitas* were sown and nurtured on foreign soil – the *Romanitas* which was the inevitable consequence of colonial settlement, which subsequently provided the springboard for Apuleius's own intellectual metamorphosis, and with which in his adulthood he came to identify. It is in this complex of historical and cultural factors that his distinctiveness lies.[36]

8

Appearing for the Defence: Apuleius on Display

When his trial took place in Sabratha before the proconsul of Africa Claudius Maximus, practising magic was not the only charge with which Apuleius was faced. His accusers also made a number of subsidiary allegations which were evidently meant to blacken his character. They concerned his life in the city of Oea (modern Tripoli), the home of his wife Pudentilla and her first husband's family, where Apuleius had arrived roughly three years earlier en route to Alexandria in Egypt (*Apol*. 72.1). It is one of those subsidiary charges with which I am concerned in this short study, a charge that on the surface seems entirely inconsequential, but when considered in detail exposes issues of historical and cultural significance. It involves Apuleius's physical appearance: the way in which he appeared to those who saw him and the way in which, especially, he appeared in his own defence. The charge was double-natured. Apuleius had two personal attributes, closely conjoined, that were somehow problematical and reproachful: he was handsome and eloquent. Quoting the words of the advocate Tannonius Pudens, this was the way, Apuleius says (*Apol*. 4.1), the prosecution began its case against him: '*Accusamus apud te philosophum formonsum et tam Graece quam Latine' – pro nefas! – 'disertissimum*' ('"We accuse before you a philosopher, who is handsome and who, in both Greek and Latin" – what a shame! – "is a very skilful speaker"').[1]

In response Apuleius cleverly deflected the accusation. If it were true that he was handsome and eloquent, the gifts of the gods could not be rejected, and in any case philosophers from the past such as Pythagoras and Zeno of Elea had been handsome and their physical appearance had simply complemented their high-mindedness. Yet Apuleius was not handsome: he was no more than relatively good looking, and his body was in fact pale and thin, the result of ceaseless intellectual activity. To illustrate his point he pointed

to his hair, which his accusers claimed he wore long to make his appearance still more appealing. It was in fact a tangled and knotted mess and there was nothing at all elegant about it. It was 'much like flax for stuffing cushions, irregularly shaggy, bunched, and piled up, really inextricable' (*Apol*. 4.12: *stuppeo tomento adsimilis et inaequaliter hirtus et globosus et congestus, prorsum inenodabilis*); he had not even bothered to comb it for a long time. As for eloquence, if he were a fine speaker it would not be surprising because since his youth he had devoted himself to literary studies (*studiis litterarum* [*Apol*. 5.1]), and he had studied single-mindedly day and night. However, he was a hopeful rather than an accomplished speaker, and whatever eloquence he had was completely non-threatening (*Sed nihil ab eloquentia metuant* [*Apol*. 5.2]). The ancient poet Caecilius had said that innocence is eloquence. Well, Apuleius had led a blameless life, so perhaps he could justifiably be called eloquent.[2]

Why would Apuleius's accusers have raised this charge against him? What was so odd about good looks and the ability to speak well in Latin and Greek, about *forma* ('shape'/'beauty') and *facundia* or *eloquentia* ('eloquence'), the key terms that Apuleius used in making his rebuttal, and what was the connection between the two? These are the questions I want to consider here. My answers will focus on the theme of Apuleius's cultural identity, on the local contexts of the trial at Sabratha and Apuleius's life in Oea, and on evidence from writers on Roman rhetorical theory. I note at once that Apuleius did not flatly deny the charge, but only pilloried it, which I take to imply that in some way the position he claimed for himself was indeed threatening.

I

To begin, I want to stress a sensitivity to personal aspect on Apuleius's part that I think was widely shared in Roman imperial society at large. This will help explain Apuleius's remarks. The evidence comes from his most famous work, the *Metamorphoses*, the story of the young nobleman Lucius magically transformed into an ass, which although a work of fiction is set in the real world of the Roman empire of the second century, and displays in its characters consequently a range of social types that any ancient reader would immediately recognize. Physical appearance is an important element of categorization with them: to a large degree individuals are identifiable by their clothing and deportment, what Apuleius himself neatly calls *habitus et habitudo* (*Met*.1.20).[3]

At one extreme is the type of the beggar, a figure who must have been a common sight in antiquity, someone who could be seen sitting at a city street corner, pale and emaciated, clothed in no more than a layer of filth and

a ragged old cloak that barely covered his nakedness. This was a figure who could seem 'de-formed' (*Met*. 1.6, *deformatus*). At the opposite extreme is the type of the cultivated young nobleman, Lucius himself, whose clothing and deportment, though not described in detail, expressed sophistication to all who saw him and whose physical comeliness was matched by a moral purity symbolized by his body's freedom from the taint of sex. This was a type who could be called a man of education or culture, a *uir … ornatus* (*Met*. 1.20; cf. 1.23), a figure who, notably, was capable of delivering a vigorous defence of himself in court when falsely accused of murder, and also of thanking a city, if only briefly, for honours bestowed upon him (*Met*. 3.4–6, 3.11). Eloquence emerges, that is to say, as a natural companion of nobility. Between the two extremes there are all sorts and conditions: the domestic slave-girl dressed in a simple linen tunic touched up with a bright red sash (*Met*. 2.7), liveried slaves who wait at table (*Met*. 2.19), the highwayman and the miser who in their rags and tatters look much like the beggar (*Met*. 7.5, 1.21; cf. 4.9), an Egyptian prophet wearing full-length linen robes and sandals woven from palm leaves, as though in uniform (*Met*. 2.28), civic magistrates with their insignia of office (*Met*. 1.24, 3.11), and a centurion with his vine staff (*Met*. 9.39; cf. 9.40; 9.41; 10.1). Complementing Lucius in type is his relative Byrrhena, whose retinue of servants and jewels inlaid with gold and gold-threaded clothes make her at once stand out as a woman of elite status, a *matrona* (*Met*. 2.2).[4]

Some characters are described in detail. First, a group of priests of the Syrian Goddess (Dea Syria):

Die sequenti uariis coloribus indusiati et deformiter quisque formati facie caenoso pigmento delita et oculis obunctis graphice prodeunt, mitellis et crocotis et carbasinis et bombycinis iniecti, quidam tunicas albas, in modum lanciolarum quoquouersum fluente purpura depictas, cingulo subligati, pedes luteis induti calceis.

Next day they all put on tunics of various hues and beautified themselves by smearing coloured gunge on their faces and applying eye-shadow. Then they set forth, dressed in turbans and robes, some saffron-coloured, some of linen and some of gauze; some had white tunics embroidered with a pattern of purple stripes and girded at the waist; and on their feet were yellow slippers. (*Met*. 8.27)

Second, slave workers in a mill:

Dii boni, quales illic homunculi uibicibus liuidis totam cutem depicti dorsumque plagosum scissili centunculo magis inumbrati quam obtecti, nonnulli exiguo tegili tantum modo pubem iniecti, cuncti tamen sic tunicati ut essent per pannulos manifesti,

frontes litterati et capillum semirasi et pedes anulati, tum lurore deformes et fumosis tenebris uaporosae caliginis palpebras adesi atque adeo male luminati et in modum pugilum, qui puluisculo perspersi dimicant, farinulenta cinere sordide candidati.

As to the human contingent – what a crew! – their whole bodies picked out with livid weals, their whip-scarred backs shaded rather than covered by their tattered rags, some with only a scanty loin-cloth by way of covering, and all of them showing through the rents in what clothes they had. There were branded foreheads, half-shaven heads, and fettered ankles; their faces were sallow, their eyes so bleared by the smoky heat of the furnaces that they were half-blind; and like boxers, who sprinkle themselves with dust before fighting, they were dirty white all over with a floury powder. (*Met*. 9.12)

Third, a woman in turmoil:

Diem ferme circa mediam repente intra pistrinum mulier reatu miraque tristitie deformis apparuit, flebili centunculo semiamicta, nudis et intectis pedibus, lurore buxeo macieque foedata, et discerptae comae semicanae sordentes inspersu cineris pleramque eius anteuentulae contegebant faciem.

Round about midday a woman suddenly appeared at the mill got up as if she were on trial for her life, strangely disfigured and woebegone, barely covered in pitiful rags, barefoot, deathly pale and drawn, her grizzled hair dishevelled, dirty and sprinkled with ash, hanging down in front and hiding most of her face. (*Met*. 9.30)

Evidently enough, in the world of the *Metamorphoses* dress and deportment are vehicles that send signals about social and economic standing and specific social functions and situations – not least the situation of the courtroom, as the last example notably suggests, where a despondent demeanour is thought appropriate for a defendant in peril, and hair, significantly, is thought to be full of demonstrative potential. Apuleius, it should be noted, had a peculiar interest in hair, its most notorious manifestation in the *Metamorphoses* being an erotically charged, rhapsodic digression from Lucius on the attractiveness of women's hair (*Met*. 2.8–9) – carefully arranged hair is said to be the ultimate sign of proper grooming – which reaches a climax in a description of the hair of the slave-girl Photis: *Vberes enim crines leniter remissos et ceruice dependulos ac dein per colla dispositos sensimque sinuatos patagio residentes paulisper ad finem conglobatos in summum uerticem nodus adstrinxerat* ('Her luxuriant tresses were carelessly flung back, hanging down her neck and over her shoulders; where they just touched the upper edge of her tunic she had gently looped them

up and gathered the ends together into a knot on the top of her head' [*Met.* 2.9]). Dress was also full of gendered possibilities, as Apuleius shows in the words of a robber who had resorted to a ruse to escape the emperor's troops: *sumpta ueste muliebri florida, in sinus flaccidos abundante, mitellaque textili contecto capite, calceis femininis albis illis et tenuibus indutus* ('I put on a woman's dress, brightly coloured and hanging in loose folds, covered my head with a gauze turban, and slipped on my feet a pair of those thin white shoes that women wear' [*Met.* 7.8]). Clothing in this case has a transformative value, making things appear to be what they are not. So also when the wife of a Roman courtier crops her hair to look like a man and anonymously follow him into exile (*Met.* 7.6), or when a robber whose comrades replace his rags with a fancy robe finds himself completely re-formed (*Met.* 7.9, *reformatus*). All this, it might be said, is unexceptional. But because the *Metamorphoses* illustrates the code-like capacity of dress and demeanour, and expresses through its realistic base assumptions about personal appearance that its author must have taken to be widely shared among his readers, not only in Rome, say, but also in the extra-urban, provincial world in which the story of Lucius is set, there are grounds for thinking that the charge of *forma* and *facundia* in the *Apology* was not as trivial as it first seems, and for postulating that Apuleius, alert to the code, was engaged with more than the superficial in his defence of the accusations made against him.[5]

II

The trial took place in a judicial basilica in the centre of Sabratha where Claudius Maximus, visiting the city to hold the local assizes, heard cases brought before him. The basilica was within sight of the sea, and given that the production of fish-sauce (*garum*) at Sabratha was so extensive that its odour could hardly be avoided, the smell of fish was doubtless in the air. Claudius Maximus will have worn the toga as he sat on his tribunal, elevated above the litigants, and he will have been surrounded by a group of similarly attired advisers who were part of the retinue that accompanied every governor on his travels, including the circuit tour of the province he was required to make for judicial purposes. The defendant and his prosecutor will also have been formally dressed; and the governor's herald will have directed operations – 'bellowing at the top of his voice' as Apuleius puts it on another occasion (*Flor.* 9.10) – and perhaps underscoring the solemnity of the proceedings by directing attention to the statues of the emperor, Antoninus Pius, that decorated the court.[6]

The principals were not the only people present at the trial. There was also a substantial crowd of bystanders, people presumably of the sort portrayed

generically, as types, in the *Metamorphoses*: if not highwaymen and other robbers (though even their presence should not be discounted), then certainly decurions, merchants and moneylenders, millers, pastry cooks and fullers, market gardeners, paupers and beggars, widows and nurses, stewards and doctors – a varied mixture of the men and women, free and slave, high and low, who could be found in almost any provincial Roman community. In type again many can also be seen in the lavish and abundant mosaics with which the elite of Roman North Africa filled their houses and villas. Think at one extreme of the *dominus* Julius and his wife, surrounded by servants and retainers on their great rural estate, or of the Venus-like *domina* who is shown with her slaves, adorning herself and displaying her magnificence in her rich clothing, jewellery, and elaborate hairstyle, just like Byrrhena, in celebrated examples from the Bardo Museum. Or at the opposite end of the social scale think likewise of the fishermen who are commonly represented in North African mosaics wearing no more than loin-cloths as they toil on the sea in the heat of the day with their nets, lines, and fishing spears: humble men lacking in status and dignity. (It was men like this Apuleius had asked at Oea to collect specimens for what he claimed were his zoological and medical researches [*Apol*. 29–41]). As the spectacle of Roman justice displayed itself in a remote corner of the empire, the crowd of observers was probably marked by a similar contrast of aspect, and many will have been conscious of the difference between themselves and the principals who sat upon and stood before the governor's tribunal.[7]

Before this audience, but with attention directed especially at his judge, Apuleius delivered his speech of defence, which exists now of course as a written text to be read. Whether the written version is the speech Apuleius originally gave at his trial or a more polished version revised for publication remains unknowable. A statement from one of several later speeches given at Carthage in the 160s (*Flor*. 9.13) implies that Apuleius's words were sometimes taken down verbatim and published without alteration. But the practice of the younger Pliny a half century earlier in Rome had been to rework and publish in fuller form his forensic speeches; and earlier still Pliny's teacher Quintilian had remarked (*Inst*. 7.2.24) that only one of his speeches had been published, while profiteering stenographers had circulated others, misrepresenting what he said in the process. Whatever the case, the presumption must be that the *Apology* as it now exists preserves the substance of what was said at the trial, no matter what the degree of artifice involved in the presentation. The speech, moreover, was given by a speaker who had performed in public before. Shortly after arriving in Oea Apuleius had spoken on the majesty of the god Aesculapius, and this address, by his own account, had been well received and was subsequently made public in book form. An

extract from the address was read out during the trial (*Apol*. 55.10). There were probably other such speeches (cf. *Apol*. 73.2).[8]

Not least for this reason, Apuleius is often said to have had much in common with the Greek sophists of his age, itinerant speechmakers who travelled from city to city parading their *paideia* in public performances designed to display the delights of classical Attic diction. Much is known of these show performers and the competitive ethos which enveloped their lives, especially from Philostratus's *Lives of the Sophists*, a work which for present purposes is especially important because it discloses from a host of passing details a particular sophistic sensitivity to physical appearance. Of Marcus of Byzantium, for instance, Philostratus writes: 'The expression of his brows and the gravity of his countenance proclaimed Marcus a sophist, and indeed his mind was constantly brooding over some theme … His beard and hair were always unkempt, and hence most thought that he looked too boorish to be a learned man' (*VS* 528–9). Of Aristocles of Pergamum, a sophistic convert, Philostratus says: 'Now, so long as he was a student of philosophy he was slovenly in appearance, unkempt and squalid in his dress, but now he began to be fastidious, [and] discarded his slovenly ways' (*VS* 567). Alexander Peloplaton was of 'a godlike appearance' and was 'conspicuous for his beauty and charm. For his beard was curly and of moderate length, his eyes large and melting, his nose well shaped, his teeth very white, his fingers long and slender, and well fitted to hold the reins of eloquence' (*VS* 570). Hermocrates of Phocaea was another speaker remembered for 'the beauty of his personal appearance,' a figure 'indeed possessed of great charm' who 'looked like a statue with the bloom of early youth' (*VS* 612). A man could make a mark by the crescent-shaped buckles he wore on his shoes (*VS* 555), or by the perfect elegance of his appearance (*VS* 572).[9]

It is easy from this point of view to see how a link with Apuleius might be made. By definition sophists were men of eloquence fastidious about matters of self-presentation, and Apuleius's determination to deny in court his physical attractiveness could be taken to mean that he had developed a reputation for pursuing the cult of beauty, if not dandyism, with which sophists – 'voluble expounders of the commonplace who paraded the world in vanity and splendour' – were fixated. The notion becomes all the more appealing given that as a young man Apuleius had studied in Athens, where he cannot have failed to find himself exposed to contemporary sophistic culture, discourse, and style. One sophist almost certain to have taught in Athens when Apuleius was there, probably in the early 140s, and possibly one of his teachers, was P. Hordeonius Lollianus, an immigrant from Ephesus who came to hold high office in Athens and to occupy a chair of rhetoric in the city. He gave instruction in declamation, favouring a concise Attic style, and

was remembered for his good technique and the straightforward manner in which he arranged and presented his material and ideas. He also composed a book on declamation, of which nothing now but fragments survive, but even as late as the fifth century he was still regarded as an authority. He was honoured, moreover, by the Athenians as a distinguished rhetor in judicial and declamatory contexts. If not an actual teacher of Apuleius, Hordeonius at least symbolizes the type of instructor to whom Apuleius can be imagined to have attached himself. On the other hand, unlike two genuine sophists from the west, the Gaul Favorinus and the Roman Aelian, Apuleius did not attract the attention of Philostratus, nor in his extant works does Apuleius ever call himself a sophist, consistently preferring the term *philosophus* which, even if understood broadly to mean a 'philosophiser' or 'intellectual,' rather than in the narrow sense of an original, systematic thinker, clearly sets him apart from sophists. The extent to which Greek sophists were engaged with philosophy remains contentious. But Apuleius's self-description presents to my mind a claim of identity far different from theirs, and his denial of any pretensions to beauty and eloquence can be taken as a way of distinguishing himself from them.[10]

In this connection it is worth pausing for a moment to observe that the flow of cultural traffic in the imperial age did not move in a single direction from east to west as is frequently assumed. When Apuleius studied in Athens, the city had of course long been politically subject to Rome (even if technically 'free'), and Rome's power consequently manifested itself in directly visible ways. No one who looked at the city's monuments could fail to miss Rome's presence: the signs and symbols of Roman taste and authority were everywhere unmistakable, whether M. Agrippa's Odeion in the old agora, the newer Roman agora of Caesar and Augustus, or, perhaps especially remarkable to a second-century visitor such as Apuleius, the imposing items of the massive building program that the emperor Hadrian had recently undertaken. The great library that Hadrian built, for instance, was modelled on the Flavian Temple of Peace in Rome, and was in effect a Roman imperial forum of the kind to be seen in many cities where emperors displayed their grandeur through monumental construction. From the first century onwards, Roman architectural influence in Athens had steadily if fitfully grown, producing colonnaded streets in the centre of the city of a common imperial type, and, at the northern end of the Stoa of Attalus, a large basilica that symbolized the arrival of Roman justice. On the acropolis there was a temple of Rome and Augustus that stood before the eastern entrance of the Parthenon, and through the Propylaea could be seen a monument to Agrippa displaying the great man's chariot. Honorific inscriptions and statues likewise proclaimed the presence and power of Roman emperors

far and wide, so that if Athens, as Pausanias said (close in time to Apuleius), 'flowered again in the reign of Hadrian' (1.20.3), it did so as a subject city: there could be no doubt of the political realities of the day. Hadrian indeed, the Olympian, Athens's saviour and founder (as altars everywhere made manifest), had appropriated the city to himself, the emperor of Rome, with daringly bold inscriptions set on either side of an arch that displayed his supremacy over the legendary Theseus, who was now an irrelevant relic: 'This is Athens, the former city of Theseus'; 'This is the city of Hadrian, not of Theseus.'[11]

Athens in the second century was therefore in many respects a Roman city, and any notion that a visitor from the west found himself exclusively dominated by Greek cultural forms and traditions is surely mistaken. Greece had not entirely conquered its captor. The reverse rather held true, as Pausanias makes clear in his poignant remark that a Roman governor continued to be sent to Greece (7.6.10). Apuleius consequently would not necessarily have been swept away by the older traditions of Greek culture and Athenian resplendence represented by its more ancient buildings and sites, as they now appear, say, in Pausanias's catalogue of monuments and artworks in the city, nor would he necessarily have lost sight of the Roman ethos of either his birthplace Madauros or of the great city of Carthage, where he had studied as a child. On one occasion, he observed with a young connoisseur's eye that Phidias had placed his own image on the shield of the cult statue of Athena in the Parthenon (*De mundo* 32). As he looked, however, he might have wondered who in fact was the more potent: the ancient goddess of the Athenians, or the new Roman god Hadrian, whose portrait he could see right there in her temple. Pausanias was to remark on it (1.24.7).

The *Apology* when originally delivered cannot have been a form of display oratory like the speeches of the sophists, nor was it composed as a work of literature. It was and remains in the first instance a judicial speech. It is unlikely therefore that Apuleius's strategy in court had anything to do with presenting himself as a sophist, a subject of empire, for contemporary sophistry was indeed a reaction to, and a symbol of, Greek political impotence, and there can have been little incentive for those who considered themselves Roman, as Apuleius did, to identify with it. It is surely more plausible that his aim was to present himself to his judge, a man of known philosophical temperament, in a way that evoked the conventional image of the philosopher, which is what Apuleius calls himself and dwells upon, and as an ascetic who had rejected luxury and spent all his time in intellectual pursuits. (Recall the statement that he was worn thin from a life of continual study.) This image, or type, comparable to the types of the *Metamorphoses*,

is evident in contemporary portrait sculpture, where men are shown with masses of unkempt hair, coarse facial features, distant expressions, and straggly beards. It was an image with which Claudius Maximus can be presumed to have been familiar, as also many of the residents of Roman Tripolitania. Apuleius's goal, moreover, may not only have been tactical; he may also have intended to give an accurate indication of who, or what, he really considered himself to be. The claim he makes in the *Apology* to being a philosopher is borne out after all by the composition of philosophical works, some of which can still be read, no matter what their quality, and it was as a *philosophus Platonicus* that he was at one point honoured in Madauros. In late antiquity, notably, his work on demonology was of special interest to Augustine, who took great pains to refute much of what Apuleius the philosopher had written.[12]

At the same time, there may be another, complementary, approach of which to take account. For obvious reasons Apuleius's courtroom motivations or intentions can never fully be known. But the disordered hair may have registered something other than the philosophical. In Egyptian mummy portraits of the imperial age tousled curly hair is sometimes shown on men who were soldiers, their untidy hair signifying military masculinity in a way that can be presumed common in view of the portraits' adoption of metropolitan fashions. Could such a claim also underlie Apuleius's remarks on his appearance? To talk about beauty in a young man, to describe features such as the beard, eyes, and hair, was to run something of a rhetorical risk on a public speaker's part according to the third-century handbook attributed to Menander of Laodicaea (2.398), the implication being that connections might easily be made between male beauty and effeminacy. So perhaps the prosecution's original charge against Apuleius had been designed to raise a hint of scandal. It is at this point, I propose, that evidence from the Roman rhetorical tradition becomes relevant.[13]

III

Apuleius's knowledge of Latin literature was comprehensive. In the *Apology* he appeals with ease to Ennius, Catullus, and Virgil (among others), and allusions to a very wide range of Latin authors are detectable in the *Metamorphoses*. Assimilation of Roman rhetorical theory as represented by the theoretical works of Cicero and Quintilian should be readily granted. The Roman rhetorical tradition was of course Greek-influenced, but it had long had a distinctive cast. Cicero at an early stage of *De oratore* (1.23) drew a firm line between the Greek rhetorical legacy and the independence of the Roman tradition, and Quintilian in his great work on the institution of

the orator found it easy to match Roman against Greek achievements (*Inst*. 10.1.105; cf. 12.10.27–39).[14]

Notice accordingly some of the prescriptions on self-presentation that were part of this tradition. Cicero was very specific in the *Orator* (55–60) on how to exploit for rhetorical success what he calls, almost literally, body language (*corporis quaedam eloquentia; Orator* 55; cf. *De oratore* 3.222: *sermo corporis*). Apart from being able to vary the voice according to circumstance and the emotional demands of the moment, in his physical carriage (*gestus*) the speaker was to do nothing to excess, but was to preserve an upright and lofty bearing with little pacing up and down or sudden change of direction. Control of facial expression was equally important. What was needed was to convey an impression of *dignitas*, grandeur or dignity, and *uenustas*, charm or elegance. Foolish or threatening looks were to be avoided at all costs, and what was most important was to keep control of the eyes, so that the right amount of joy or grief at a particular stage of delivery could be communicated. Sensitivity to the danger of appearing unmanly is patent: *nulla mollitia ceruicum, nullae argutiae digitorum, non ad numerum articulus cadens; trunco magis toto se ipse moderans et uirili laterum flexione, brachi proiectione in contentionibus, contractione in remissis* ('There should be no effeminate bending of the neck, no twiddling of the fingers, no marking the rhythm with the finger-joint. [The speaker] will control himself by the pose of his whole frame, and the vigorous and manly attitude of the body, extending the arm in moments of passion, and dropping it in calmer moods' [*Orator* 59]). Much of a similar sort appears in Cicero's other rhetorical writings. Gestures must be manly, he says in the *De oratore* (3.220), while from a passage in the *Brutus* (225), it appears that nothing is worse than an orator seeming to be 'soft' (*mollis*), than for a new dance to become all the rage and be named after a speaker who develops a reputation for effeminacy while speaking in public – a reference to the notorious case of the Republican orator Sextus Titius and the 'Titian' dance craze he had created, which was still worthy of remark from Quintilian a century later (*Inst*. 11.3.128).[15]

Quintilian was obsessed with securing a correctly gendered result from his prescriptions. The boy he proposed to train as a speaker was not to speak with the voice of a woman, any more than with the voice of an old man, an alcoholic, a slave, a eunuch, or an invalid (*Inst*. 1.11.1–2; 11.3.19). Music was a valuable part of his formation, but it must be the manly music of old, not the womanish warbling of the modern stage (*Inst*. 1.10.31). Virility was to be found in the old Latin poets, and studying published speeches would reveal the effeminate styles to be avoided (*Inst*. 1.8.9; 2.5.10). The signs of effeminacy were legion: you had to avoid rhythmical effects suggestive of the

dancing girl and declamation that made your listeners think of eunuchs castrated by slave-dealers (*Inst*. 9.4.142; 5.12.17–23). Under no circumstances were you to go in for unmanly depilation, plaster on womanish cosmetics, or gyrate when performing with a hip-swivelling gait (*Inst*. 5.9.14; 8.pr.19–20; cf. 8.3.6). Men are de-formed (*deformentur*), Quintilian says (*Inst*. 11.1.3), if they wear jewels and pearls and full-length clothes like those of a woman: it is as bad as if a woman were to dress in the costume of a general celebrating a triumph, besmirching the most manly – because most militaristic – of all Rome's honours. No, the orator's dress must be virile and splendid (*Inst*. 11.3.137), and Quintilian duly gives elaborate instructions on how the speaker is to wear the toga, its cut and its style and its texture: you do not have to wear the roughly woven toga of old, but you must not wear a toga made of silk, and even the tunic you wear underneath should conform to a manly mode (*Inst*. 11.3.137–49). Not to follow these rules is to fall victim to all the fashions of the decadent present, and to fail to emerge as a true Roman orator of proper moral character.[16]

The style of the orator's hair is a significant element in this preoccupation with public presentation, in which there is a constant presumption that the orator, any orator, is an object of widespread scrutiny and judgment, and that individual repute depends on playing a role, much like that of an actor (cf. *Inst*. 1.11.1–2), which can be evaluated according to commonly understood standards of deportment. Quintilian is emphatic that elaborately arranged hair is a sign of womanly weakness. He inveighs (*Inst*. 2.5.12) against what must have been a common practice of men using heated irons to curl their hair, not only branding the practice as effeminate but also stigmatizing it as a perversion of natural *forma*, natural good looks. In contrast to the elder Pliny, he recommends that an orator in full flow should not mop his sweaty brow and so avoid messing up his hair (*Inst*. 11.3.148): no, let the hair fall out of place, because this produces a good emotional effect and creates a good impression of inattentiveness to fashionable appearance. You just had to be careful not to push your hair backwards in the wrong direction, from the forehead, making it stand on end and scaring your audience to death (*Inst*. 11.3.160). Evidently enough, if from Quintilian's point of view there was nothing to be said for crimps and curls, dishevelled hair was very much the mark of a good man skilled in speaking, as well of course as a traditional way of arousing sympathy, as if the orator were in mourning (*Inst*. 6.1.30; 6.1.33).

This evidence does much, I think, to explain Apuleius's self-portrait, especially the description of his hair. His self-deprecating comments were one of the many devices by which he could appeal to his judge to regard him both as an orator formed in a Roman mould as well as a like-minded philosopher.

He knew the type of the orator after all, as the flagrant parody in the *Metamorphoses* (3.27) of Cicero's most famous rhetorical line, attributed to a slave addressing Lucius the Ass, makes clear (*'Quo usque tandem … cantherium patiemur istum'* ['How long, for God's sake … are we going to put up with this miserable brute?']). More important, at one point during his trial he deftly listed a string of grand Roman orators from the Republican past in whose reflected glory he could himself bask: Cato, Laelius, Gracchus, Caesar, Hortensius, Calvus, Sallust, and Cicero (*Apol*. 95.5). The *forma* of the Roman orator was far more valuable in court than the dandyism of the Greek sophist.[17]

IV

At the same time, the accusation concerning *forma* and *facundia* was not tied to the moment of the trial alone. Apuleius's critics had been able to accuse him of something that had created a negative impact during the several years he had spent in Oea, and for some reason his presence in the local community, and particularly his eloquence, had been regarded as a threat, as his own language indicates: *Sed nihil ab eloquentia metuant, quam ego, si quid omnino promoui, potius spero quam praesto* ('But as things are, my opponents should have nothing to fear from my eloquence; if I have made any advance, it is through hope rather than attainment' [*Apol*. 5.2]). What could this have been? I move now to the pre-trial context, but remain focused on the Roman rhetorical tradition.

The ideal Roman orator had not only to look physically impressive, but was to be a man steeped in *doctrina* as well. The two went hand in hand. Consider as evidence a list of successful speakers from the Republican past and the way Cicero describes them in the *Brutus*:

1. Tiberius Gracchus: *Graecis litteris eruditus* ('accomplished in Greek literature' [*Brut*. 104])
2. Publius Rutilius: *doctus uir et Graecis litteris eruditus* ('a learned man accomplished in Greek literature' [*Brut*. 114])
3. Marcus Gratidius: *doctus … Graecis litteris* ('learned in Greek literature' [*Brut*. 168])
4. Quintus and Decimus Valerius of Sora: *docti et Graecis litteris et Latinis* ('learned in Greek and Latin literature' [*Brut*. 169])
5. Lucius Philippus: *Graecis doctrinis institutus* ('trained up in Greek learning' [*Brut*. 173])
6. Decimus Brutus: *homo et Graecis doctus litteris et Latinis* ('a man learned in Greek and Latin literature' [*Brut*. 175])

7. Lucius Aelius: *eruditissimus et Graecis litteris et Latinis* ('most accomplished in Greek and Latin literature' [*Brut*. 205])
8. M. Terentius Varro: *uir ingenio praestans omnique doctrina* ('a man outstanding in intellect and every kind of knowledge' [*Brut*. 205])
9. Lucius Sisenna: *doctus uir et studiis optimis deditus* ('a learned man devoted to the best of intellectual pursuits' [*Brut*. 228])
10. Marcus Piso: *Graecis doctrinis eruditus* ('accomplished in Greek learning' [*Brut*. 236])

Learning, particularly Greek learning, was a test of the ideal Roman orator.[18]

Consider next another group of men, but from a different time and place. They are known from epitaphs from the cities of Roman Africa and were also remembered as devotees of literature and eloquence: men such as Q. Julius Felix from Cirta (*CIL* VIII 7432) and the equestrian Julius Rusticianus from Calama (*CIL* VIII 5367), both of whom died young but who by the time of their deaths had firmly dedicated themselves to *studia*, just as Apuleius had done (*ab ineunte aeuo unis studiis litterarum ex summis uiribus deditus* ['From my youth on I have devoted all my powers to literary studies' (*Apol*. 5.1)]). There was the orator C. Julius Proculus (*CIL* VIII 646), who was praised at Mactar for bringing the pleasures of learning (*studia*) to public audiences dressed, notably, in the toga, and M. Dalmatius Urbanus (*CIL* VIII 8500 = *ILS* 7761), remembered at Sitifis for his fine speaking and knowledge of literature and the liberal arts, in both Latin and Greek: *summarum artium liberalium litterarum studiis utriusq(ue) linguae perfecte eruditus optima facundia praeditus* ('a man perfectly accomplished in study of all the liberal arts and literature in both languages and gifted with perfect eloquence'). One supremely gifted but anonymous individual from Thibilis (*CIL* VIII 5530 = 18864), not unlike Apuleius himself, was an accomplished declaimer with a talent for the extemporaneous – Quintilian would have approved – and the author of philosophical dialogues, epistles, pastorals, and eclogues. P. Flavius Pudens Pomponianus (*CIL* VIII 2391 = 17910), *clarissimus uir*, was said, significantly I think, to have added a Roman shine (or polish) to his Attic eloquence: *Atticam facundiam adaequanti Romano nitori*; and of special interest, observe C. Cornelius Fortunatianus of Sicca (*CIL* VIII 15987 = *ILS* 7742a & b), who died at the age of twenty-three and was said to have been *studiis praecellens formaq(ue) decorus* ('outstanding in his intellectual pursuits and handsome in appearance').[19]

The epitaphs of these mostly young men give expression to an ideal of Roman speech making that is evidently close to the ideal that underlies Cicero's descriptions of Republican orators. They illustrate how the lives

of the provincial elite in the cities of Roman North Africa in the imperial age were permeated by the oratorical and literary traditions of the Roman metropolis, the vitality of which in the capital itself can be assumed from Quintilian's work in his epoch and, a generation before Apuleius, from the rhetorical and literary record of the younger Pliny, who in his day was another devotee of *studia* among a circle of like-minded men. Alongside the physical and especially architectural development of provincial communities, the intellectual traditions of the metropolis found their way abroad, and were welcomed by those who aspired to participation in the greater Roman imperial enterprise. From this perspective it should come as no surprise to see that in the *Metamorphoses* the young provincial aristocrat Lucius is a man of *doctrina* (*Met*. 3.15; cf. 11.15), and that the sons of a well-to-do provincial *paterfamilias* are said to be *doctrina instructis et uerecundia praeditis* (*Met*. 9.35: 'well educated and irreproachably behaved').[20]

The process by which the culture of the capital was transmitted to the provinces is commonly called 'Romanization.' But Romanization is not the straightforward historical category it was a generation ago – a unidirectional construct which for the better (it was assumed) firmly planted Roman civilization in culturally barren lands. On the contrary, allowance is increasingly made as the impact of Roman norms on local provincial populations is considered for the possibility of local resistance to Rome, for signs of negotiation and accommodation between the intrusive, alien ways of the metropolis and the pre-existing patterns of local culture, and the likelihood of the emergence over time of hybrid cultural forms. In North Africa specifically, the Latinate norms introduced by Roman settlements did not fill an empty void, but met long-established Punic and other indigenous traditions that continued to thrive alongside them, as the long survival of Punic as a vernacular language and the endurance of Punic forms of religious worship cloaked in classical guise best indicate. Signs of cultural and social tension accordingly are to be expected in the cities of Roman Africa. The potential for antagonism and disturbance in colonized regions was strong.[21]

When Apuleius, quite accidentally, became a resident of Oea, he entered a community of the sort of which the *Metamorphoses* is full, towns where a small elite held sway over a majority of the population, but where social ranks easily mingled in day-to-day life. A small-town murder trial could quickly bring together magistrates, decurions, and people: the banker, the public herald, the well-to-do doctor, the magistrates' attendants, domestic slaves (*Met*. 10.1–12). Village love affairs could likewise involve all sorts of social mixing: neighbouring bakers and fullers, their slave workers and retainers, well-placed decurions and their domestics, some highly trusted, the poverty-stricken market gardener and the impoverished woman wandering

around in her mourning might all find themselves intimately engaged with one another (*Met*. 9.10–31). Of his enemies, the family of the Sicinii from whom Apuleius pried away the wealthy Pudentilla (and his whole trial was in essence a struggle for money), nothing is known beyond the *Apology*. But they must have had some means. Apuleius had met one of Pudentilla's sons in Athens some years earlier and they were probably fellow students there (*Apol*. 72.3). The son had died an untimely death when returning (it seems) from a journey to Carthage just before Apuleius's trial (*Apol*. 96.5–6), his fate recalling the deaths of two other young men, both students at Carthage when they died, L. Veditius Maternus Veditianus of Thubursicu Numidarum, the son of a locally prominent father who died at the age of eighteen (*ILAlg*. 1363), and L. Baebius Barbarus, who was twenty when he passed away (*CIL* VIII 12152). It was possible for young men like these to travel to acquire an education in Latin and Greek, even to travel abroad, and for some, as seen a moment ago, it was possible to achieve distinction as men of learning. Their families had the resources to make this happen. But it was not axiomatic that every young boy travelled and learned. Pudentilla's other son is said to have spoken only Punic, not to have known Latin at all, and to have had only a few words of Greek (*Apol*. 98.8). (Greek was not extensively used in Roman North Africa.) I suspect that he had many counterparts in Oea, not only among the working population represented by the fishermen of the mosaics I referred to earlier, but even in his own family. The Sicinii, although prosperous, cannot all be assumed to have been well educated or committed to metropolitan culture.[22]

Apuleius was committed. His origins were obscure, but when he arrived in Oea Apuleius brought with him the learning of the philosopher and orator acquired from his years of study abroad, and his learning was a source of distinctiveness that must have made him stand out in the city, like Lucius in Hypata, as a *uir ornatus*. There were probably few who could rival his sophistication. Yet distinctiveness on the part of an outsider was not without its problems. Lucius was recognized in Hypata as a man of high rank and impeccable pedigree (*Met*. 3.11). But because he was a stranger to the community he became an obvious object of assault when the whole city population needed a victim in whose humiliation it could find amusement at the Festival of Risus (*Met*. 3.2–11). Different, intruding, disturbing, the outsider could easily find himself the target of accusation (*Met*. 3.3, *reum peregrinum*). In the city of Oea, Apuleius was undoubtedly a disturbing influence. The most alarming aspect of his behaviour, it cannot be otherwise, was the practice of sinister magical rituals. The accusations brought against him in court cannot have been groundless, and when an opportunity arose to hold him accountable it was evidently taken. Magic was a threat. Eloquence,

however, was in and of itself also threatening, a potential cause of envy and resentment, representing as it did the rising dominance of metropolitan culture in a local environment far from culturally stable or homogeneous. Against a background of cultural interchange and transition, Apuleius gave public presentations of his educated classical eloquence. And he somehow persuaded Pudentilla to marry him. For many years beforehand, the Sicinii had kept Pudentilla's wealth within their control. Yet once Apuleius entered upon the scene, their plans to maintain control in the future were thrown into disarray. Eloquence and learning bestowed power, and power exercised by an outsider was dangerous. Local networks of influence were disrupted, and familial and economic turmoil followed.[23]

V

In his trial at Sabratha, it was more than appropriate for Apuleius, wearing the toga, looking upwards to the proconsul on his tribunal, speaking in Latin in a Roman basilica, to display himself as a fully fashioned, fully masculine orator in the Roman tradition. It was appropriate, that is, for the social observer and portraitist who understood very well the communicative and transformative capacity of dress and deportment to present himself when he appeared in his own defence in a fully Roman idiom. This was the way to win his case. Beneath this self-display, however, something might be sensed of the tensions felt on the fringes of empire as the process of cultural exchange implicit in the term Romanization worked itself out in the high imperial age.

9

Apuleius and the Sub-Saharan Slave Trade

One of the ways in which Apuleius attacks his accuser Sicinius Aemilianus in the *Apology* is to say that until shortly before his trial he had known little about his opponent: *etiam libenter te nuper usque albus an ater esses ignoraui* (*Apol*. 16.9). Apuleius's remark is part of a vituperative assault contrasting his own life of brilliant enlightenment with Aemilianus's life of ignorant darkness:

At ego non mirer, si boni consulis me de isto distortissimo uultu tuo dicere, de moribus tuis multo truculentioribus reticere. Ea res est: praeter quod non sum iurgiosus, etiam libenter te nuper usque albus an ater esses ignoraui et adhuc hercle non satis noui. Id adeo factum, quod et tu rusticando obscurus es et ego discendo occupatus; ita et tibi umbra ignobilitatis a probatore obstitit, et ego numquam studui male facta cuiusquam cognoscere, sed semper potius duxi mea peccata tegere quam aliena indagare. Igitur hoc mihi aduersum te usu uenit, quod qui forte constitit in loco lumine collustrato atque eum alter e tenebris prospectat. Nam ad eundem modum tu quidem, quid ego in propatulo et celebri agam, facile e tenebris tuis arbitraris, cum ipse humilitate abdita et lucifuga non sis mihi mutuo conspicuus.

But I would not be surprised if you preferred me to speak about your disfigured features rather than say anything about your character, much more savage as it is. This is how things are: not being a contentious man myself, until quite recently I did not even know whether you were black or white, and with pleasure too! Actually, not even today do I know a great deal about you. The reason for this is that you are invisible because of your farmer's life, whereas I am absorbed in my studies. So the shadow of obscurity prevented you from being examined, while I never wanted to find out other people's wrongs: I preferred to have my own lapses kept from view rather than track down those of others. In facing you, therefore, my experience is

that of someone standing in the bright light, observed by the other from the dark. For similarly, you from your darkness may easily judge all that I am doing in the open and for everyone to see, whereas you in turn are kept out of my sight by your lowly life that shuns the light. (*Apol.* 16.8–13)[1]

To claim that you did not know whether someone was white or black in order to express ignorance was proverbial at Rome, as classical textual commentators have commonly observed: Catullus, for example, writes to Caesar, *Nil nimium studeo, Caesar, tibi uelle placere, nec scire utrum sis albus an ater homo* (93: 'I have no very great desire to make myself agreeable to you, Caesar, nor to know whether your complexion is black or white'; cf. Quint. *Inst*. 11.1.38). Similarly Cicero addresses Antony in the *Philippics*, referring to a man who had left him an inheritance: *Et quidem uide quam te amarit is qui albus aterne fuerit ignoras* (2.41: 'He must indeed have loved you dearly, seeing that you do not even know whether he was black or white'). The terms of reference are forceful, suggesting a keen sensitivity to skin colour in Roman culture, and a noticeable presence of black people in Roman society. This would be true even if Apuleius's remark were thought to be literarily allusive, as so much of his writing is, rather than proverbial. A lamb in one of Phaedrus's fables (3.15.10), neglected by its mother, tells a dog that the mother did not know whether the lamb was black or white (*unde illa sciuit niger an albus nascerer*: 'How did she know whether I was born black or white?'). Lambs were, and are, sometimes black and sometimes white. Apuleius's remark has to be taken at face value, and its implications are strong.[2]

My purpose in this short study is to explore the significance and associations I think the black-and-white expression is likely to have had when Apuleius gave his speech of defence at his trial at Tripolitanian Sabratha. I shall try to recover an aspect of the immediate historical context in which the trial took place as an alternative to reading the *Apology* solely as an item of the Latin literary tradition, which I think runs the danger of occluding historical specificity and of obscuring full understanding of the text. What I have to say is completely speculative. Nonetheless I hope that the attempt at recovery will be plausible. It will become increasingly clear as I proceed that what I propose depends heavily, and does no more than endorse, suggestions made by archaeologists of Fezzan. I shall also rely on some evidence from Roman art, and I shall assume in so doing that the images that I describe have some relationship to life. This being so, even an elementary knowledge of paintings and mosaic representations suggests that Romans were used to seeing a variety of skin tones in the world around them. Moreover, conventional sources indicate that colour had meaning: 'white' and 'black'

had predictably positive and negative associations in Roman culture, which explains how it was that in the developing Christian culture of the Apuleian age 'black' was to become synonymous with 'sin.'[3]

I take it, then, that Apuleius refers when addressing Sicinius Aemilianus to black Africans, by which I mean specifically sub-Saharan peoples distinguishable by physical features traditionally termed 'Negroid' – an awkward but unavoidable term – who were predominantly the products of a regular slave trade across the Sahara desert, particularly from the regions of the Niger Bend and Lake Chad. How can this notion be substantiated?

I

To begin, the world of the *Apology* is clearly and uncontroversially a slave-owning world. One of the charges brought at his trial was that Apuleius had once set free three slaves at Oea, the city where he met and married his wife Pudentilla. There was something odd about the matter that he was forced to defend (*Apol.* 17). Another charge was that he had once sent a slave boy named Thallus into a trance, apparently by magic, though Apuleius gives a rational explanation of what had really happened, which included producing fourteen of Thallus's fellow slaves in court (*Apol.* 42–7). He mentions also a personal slave doctor named Themison (*Apol.* 48), and at one stage notes that Pudentilla gave four hundred slaves to her sons when she and Apuleius married (*Apol.* 93), a detail that implies grand-scale slave-ownership on Pudentilla's part. His accuser was a slave-owner (*Apol.* 44), and everyone, he indicates, was familiar with the buying and selling of slaves at market (*Apol.* 45). Slave-owning in Tripolitania was normative.

The *Apology* gives no intimation of the origins or appearance of the slaves it mentions. But the presence of black Africans among them can scarcely be doubted. The most instructive evidence comes from visual representations of Africans in mosaics, ceramics, and other media, which illustrate the black presence in Roman North Africa, graphically and unmistakably, in a way that literary texts cannot. A valuable collection of relevant items is available in a chapter on North Africa in the first volume of the multi-authored and superbly illustrated *The Image of the Black in Western Art*, a work which was published in 1976, but whose full potential has not yet, I think, been realized. Here, very briefly, are a few examples. First, a third-century mosaic from the House of the Laberii at Oudna showing scenes of farm work in the countryside, which includes an image of a black African setting snares in a tree to catch birds. The man is a fowler. Second, a fourth-century mosaic from Thuburbo Maius that, although fragmentary, shows black Africans as camel drivers. Third, a mosaic from Timgad that shows a macrophallic bath

worker, who carries in his left hand and across his shoulders a large shovel. He is a bath stoker. Beyond the North African material there is in addition much visual evidence to suggest that black Africans were widely diffused throughout the Roman world, as Apuleius, a great traveller, will presumably have known. Again there is a fine collection of relevant examples in another chapter of *The Image of the Black in Western Art*, one that deals with the whole of Greco-Roman antiquity, but from which I select here examples from the Roman imperial period only. First, a bronze statue from Tarraco, approximately one metre in height, of a nude African boy with hands outstretched, probably to hold a tray or lamp. Second, a mosaic from the House of Menander at Pompeii showing another macrophallic black bath worker who wears a wreath of leaves and carries in each hand a wineskin. Third, a small third-century terracotta lamp from Athens made in the form of a seated or squatting African youth who wears a *cucullus*.[4]

The natural inference to draw from this material is that it reflects experience of social reality: that is, that artists of the imperial age portrayed black Africans as they saw them in ordinary everyday life. Traditionally the black presence in the classical Mediterranean has been regarded as minimal, with an emphasis placed on the exotic character of the Africans at issue. But this view has been contested, especially by F.M. Snowden, Jr, the author of the general chapter in *The Image of the Black in Western Art* just mentioned, because it seems to underestimate the amount of the visual evidence and what this evidence implies. My inclination is to follow Snowden's suggestion that there were more black Africans in the Roman empire, especially perhaps in the North African provinces, than is usually thought. Artistic conventions can of course be invoked to explain the production of the images and objects concerned. J. Desanges, the author of the North African chapter in *The Image of the Black in Western Art*, forcefully dismissed as evidence of social realism almost all the visual material he himself collected, pointing to traditions of style and stereotype and attributing many of the items concerned – amulets, balsamaria, and lamps – to Hellenistic and especially Egyptian artistic sources. Yet the dissociation of image from life that results from interpreting artefacts predominantly in stylistic and developmental terms seems to me unreasonable and artificial, despite the clear dangers of over-literalism. Even on the most conservative of approaches, the African presence cannot be altogether denied.[5]

It is also a natural inference that the Africans displayed were predominantly slaves or of servile origin. It cannot be proved that every black African represented in art was a slave, nor is it likely. But the associations in the examples mentioned so far are self-evidently servile. Other items can

be added. A painting of a banquet scene from the House of the Triclinium in Pompeii, perhaps datable to before 62 and redolent of current idioms of Roman dining, includes among several servants shown attending the diners one who is evidently a black slave boy. He occupies a position close to his master. Whether a potential partner in sex, as has been argued, the boy is surely the kind of personal slave who at a later stage of the evening would escort and light the way home for his owner – like the slave in a Hellenistic terracotta lamp in the British Museum which takes the form of a drunken reveller leaning on his slave boy, who carries a lantern to light the way. As an iconographic type this figurine is far from unique, but it is an arresting example because it shows an African slave as the lamp bearer. It may be that Apuleius, who was in my view a careful viewer of art, had the type in mind when in the *Metamorphoses* (2.32) he has the drunken Lucius return at night with a torch-bearing slave from his relative Byrrhena's dinner party to his lodgings at the house of Milo the moneylender: *Sed cum primam plateam uadimus, uento repentino lumen quo nitebamur exstinguitur, ut uix improuidae noctis caligine liberati digitis pedum detunsis ob lapides hospitium defessi rediremus. Dumque iam iunctim proximamus* ('But no sooner were we in the street than the torch on which we were relying was blown out by a gust of wind, leaving us hardly able to see our way in the sudden darkness and stubbing our toes on the stones in our fatigue as we continued on our homeward course, holding on to each other as we went [*iunctim*]'). Image and text here seem to converge, and presume knowledge on the part of viewer and reader alike of a real use to which slaves were put. My main point, however, is that the connection between blackness and servility is unquestionable.[6]

If the evidence described so far is at all representative of the society, especially the North African society, in which Apuleius lived, an obvious question concerns the origins of the black Africans who appear to have been so conspicuous, but who cannot have been indigenous to the Mediterranean. Where did they come from? Some may have been descendants of Africans already there, but that does little to explain how their predecessors arrived.

What the visual evidence seems by definition to presuppose is a regular trade in slaves across the Sahara desert in the imperial period that brought a steady supply of Africans from regions to the south, and I think especially from the central south, to the northern coasts of the continent. Anyone who has even the slightest acquaintance with the features of the terrain involved – two thousand kilometres and more of sand seas, oceans of rock, plains of gravel, and mountain ranges – will wonder at the enormity of the enterprise; but it is an enterprise that in later history was undertaken

successfully over a very long period of time, and this in itself provides an a priori reason to consider an ancient slave trade likely.

The possibility of trans-Saharan trade at large in the Roman imperial age has long been countenanced. M.I. Rostovtzeff in the great *Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire*, for instance, was confident when discussing Tripolitania that cross-desert caravan traffic took place, and he accepted that some black slaves came from the desert. But conventional literary and epigraphical sources allow no incontestable picture to form, and the topic has remained controversial. Desanges, allowing that some metals may have been transported from the African interior to the eastern coasts of North Africa, thought that commerce across the desert was insignificant, and argued firmly that a trade in slaves was out of the question, in part because of the physical difficulties the crossing entailed. He also maintained that there were indigenous black Africans who lived on the northern fringes of the Sahara, from Morocco across Algeria and Tunisia into Fezzan, who, by implication, could satisfactorily account for Roman knowledge of Negroid peoples. His view was that black African portraits were irrelevant to the question of a desert trade, that it was from the Nile valley to the east that knowledge of black Africans in the classical world came, and, once more, that their presence was minimal. One issue that may be responsible for the division of opinion is the common assumption that trade must depend on economic concepts of demand, supply, and profitability, which in turn is related to the long debated question of whether the ancient economy at large depended on slave labour. In my view this latter issue is misleading for a world where issues of freedom and slavery were ideologically more important than economic categories and impulses as understood in the modern world. Trade may have been based on profitability to the traders concerned, but in a historical context where free and slave labour were not in direct competition, the possibility of long-distance trade in slaves cannot be ruled out simply because 'demand' for product is assumed to be low. That is to misunderstand the nature of ancient economic life.[7]

II

To clarify the issue, I want to digress at this point to a later era. In the early Islamic period, from roughly 700 to 900, there was a huge demand for slave labour on the part of the Baghdad caliphate, especially for irrigation and land reclamation projects in Iraq and Oman. Much of this demand was met in the early part of the period from European sources, particularly from northern Europe and Italy, where a complex system of slave-trading networks and routes developed that transported enslaved peoples to North Africa,

Spain, Egypt, Syria, and Iraq. Over time, however, these European sources of supply proved insufficient to meet Islamic demand because various political and demographic factors, especially disease, made mortality rates very high. Increasingly, therefore, sub-Saharan Africans were sought by Arab and Muslim traders, mostly but not exclusively from eastern Africa. The Africans concerned were used not only in primary production but also as domestic workers and as soldiers, and there was a special market for slave eunuchs. Caravan traffic crossed the Sahara desert along a series of northward-running routes that connected the interior of the African continent with the Mediterranean coasts. The lines of connection were relatively few, as follows:

> Six major routes crossed the desert: one went north from ancient Ghana to Morocco; a second stretched north from Timbuktu to Tuwat in southern Algeria; a third passed from the Niger valley and the Hausa towns through the Air Massif to Ghat and Ghadames; a fourth traveled north from Lake Chad to Murzuk in Libya; a fifth reached north from Dar Fur in the eastern Sudan to the Nile valley at Assiout; and a sixth passed north from the confluence of the Blue and White Nile to Egypt.[8]

These routes all had subsidiary branches, and variations developed over time according to changing historical conditions. The route from Lake Chad crossed Fezzan and led ultimately to Tripoli along an essentially north–south line. It was the shortest route across the Sahara, and eventually became known as the Garamantian Road. It also had a connection that joined Fezzan with the Niger to the south-west and Egypt to the north-east. What is especially interesting about it is that the extension from Fezzan to Egypt seems to have been known in antiquity, as early indeed as Herodotus (4.181–4), and this is why eastern Africa has sometimes been regarded as the prime source for the distribution of African peoples into the Mediterranean in the classical period. More arrestingly still, Tripoli, the final destination of this route, was once Roman Oea, the city where Apuleius met Pudentilla and lived for some years before his trial, encountering in the process the family of Sicinius Aemilianus to whom Pudentilla was related by a former marriage. It is a natural question therefore whether Oea, or other cities in Roman Tripolitania, may have been outlets for a slave trade that used the routes from Lake Chad and the Niger Bend that are well attested in later ages. I think the answer is yes. The trans-Saharan slave trade of the early mediaeval period is usually seen as an innovation of Arab and Muslim traders. The evidence of Herodotus, however, offers a starting point for thinking that it may be much older. The key is to consider the Garamantes after whom the Garamantian Road was named.[9]

The Garamantes of Fezzan were a people who are known from a number of references in classical authors, but the material available is limited in quantity and prejudicial in outlook. Classical writers characterized the Garamantes as peripheral, in every sense, geographically remote, and culturally no more than intractable nomadic barbarians. Modern archaeological research in Fezzan, however, especially from the late 1990s onwards, has produced new knowledge from which a different, and more direct, picture can be constructed. The result is that the Garamantes now emerge as a sophisticated people with a history and culture that extended over a long period of time, from ca. 1000 BC to ca. AD 700, their high point of development coinciding roughly with the Roman imperial age, which includes of course the era of Apuleius. Formally they were organized in a kingdom that included the various oasis towns of Fezzan, with a capital at Garama in the Wadi al-Ajal, 1000 kilometres south of Oea, where excavations have revealed royal tombs and other monumental buildings pointing to a hierarchical social structure, the use of writing, manufacturing and craft activities such as ironworking, and the importation of luxury goods. In the kingdom at large indications of pastoralism are in evidence throughout the whole era, but over time settled communities formed in the oasis centres, and cereals and fruits, especially the date palm, were cultivated through the development of sophisticated underground irrigation systems called *foggaras*. Much of the kingdom was of course arid desert, but as a whole it covered some 250,000 square kilometres and supported a population maximally estimated at between 50,000 and 100,000. Labour demands in agriculture may have made the Garamantes a slave-using society. In Apuleius's day, relations between the Garamantes and Rome were probably peaceful and cooperative, due to the conclusion of a treaty in 70 that had brought earlier conflicts to an end. To what extent Apuleius himself was familiar with these people it is impossible to say. But he sometimes journeyed to the African interior, as an incidental reference in the *Apology* to a visit to the mountains of Gaetulia makes clear (*Apol*. 41.5), and it is not impossible that he noticed, as he travelled, such features of Garamantian culture as the distinctive four-pointed stelae that marked their burial sites and the offering tables and altar-like elements that were associated with their tombs, as these structures are now known from archaeology. Attention to landscape and the landscape's cultural features is always of importance in trying to understand the world in which Apuleius moved.[10]

The new research has also shown that the oasis settlements of Fezzan functioned as nodal points in a complex network of caravan trade routes that criss-crossed the Sahara, and, in particular, linked Roman Tripolitania to the kingdom's north with tropical Africa in the region of Lake Chad and the

Niger Bend to its south. The horse and the camel were the basic means of transportation. The trade routes were protected by strategically positioned forts and checkpoints (*qsur*), one of which was Aghram Nadharif, a site on the route that ran from Fezzan to Lake Chad. This is the route that became known as the Garamantian road. The trade carried Saharan salt south and brought gold from Ghana north, which the Garamantes exchanged on the Tripolitanian coast for olive oil, weapons, and products made from gems, glass, ceramics, and metals. Grave goods found in Garamantian burials include, for instance, imported amphoras for oil and wine, as well as drinking cups, jugs, lamps, and pitchers. In other words, the Garamantes in the imperial age were commercial intermediaries between central tropical Africa and Tripolitania, whose prosperity was due in part to caravan traffic that travelled from oasis to oasis in daily stages, according to modern calculations, of roughly 45–50 kilometres for ten days at a time.[11]

This picture of the Garamantes as a hierarchically organized people inhabiting a stable kingdom supported by a diverse agricultural and trading economy that remained strong over many centuries forms a complete contrast with the peripheral image of nomadic barbarians found in classical literary sources. The British and Italian archaeologists who have created it have suggested that slaves were one of the commodities in which the Garamantes traded. But there is no conclusive archaeological evidence for this, and perhaps none is to be expected, though some second-century herms and other artistic depictions of African slaves have been taken as the product of Roman military campaigns. Nonetheless, the most important conclusion to draw from the excavations in Fezzan is that the kingdom of the Garamantes provided a crucial mechanism that makes a regular trade across the desert from central sub-Saharan regions highly plausible, and, a point that I think has not yet been made, virtually certain in view of the substantial African presence in the Roman Mediterranean that must be inferred from the artistic evidence with which I began. Moreover, while contacts with Nubia and Egypt are likely to have existed, it no longer seems necessary, given the overall patterns of Garamantian trade, to rely on eastern routes alone to account for the presence of black Africans in the classical Mediterranean world, especially in the Roman imperial age: the central African routes of the later slave trade must also come into play, which means that the trans-Saharan slave trade of the Islamic age was not an innovation but a development of a system that was well established in the imperial period at the latest, no matter what the differences of scale that may have later developed.[12]

The Saharan slave trade at large, despite many historical changes, continued for another thousand years. Even the rise of the Atlantic slave system did not interrupt it. It is well attested in the nineteenth century by accounts of their 'discoveries' written by Europeans who 'explored' Africa, some of

which I introduce at this point because the accounts allow details to emerge of how the journey across the Sahara was experienced by the victims of the trade. I imagine that conditions were essentially the same in antiquity. The long journey exacted an enormous toll, both physically and psychologically. Slaves had often to travel on foot, to wear shackles to prevent escape, and to carry their own frequently insufficient supplies of food and, sometimes, their children as well. They wore minimal clothing, and at night they were exposed to the cold of the desert, which was sometimes so intense that it killed them. They also had to cope with the initial trauma of capture and enslavement, the shock of removal from everything that was socially and emotionally fixed in their worlds, and as they travelled further and further into the unknown they had to decide whether to try to escape and return to their homes, or even whether they should end their sufferings quickly by taking their own lives.[13]

Such issues come to light in a book written by the French soldier Eugène Daumas called *Le grand désert: Itinéraire d'une caravane du Sahara au pays des nègres, royaume de Haoussa*, which describes events of the 1830s. It includes an account of a slave raid ordered by the Islamic emir of Katsina in northern Nigeria, a city which was once a grand commercial centre. The emir sent troops into neighbouring Hausa communities to enslave people he could trade to a group of merchants who had recently arrived there. A month later, the soldiers returned at the head of a train of two thousand slaves. This is Daumas's record of what he was told of their arrival by one of the waiting merchants:

> The prisoners walked at the head, men, women, children, the elderly, almost all naked or half covered in rags of blue cloth. The women and the elderly were unbound but tightly packed together; the children were piled onto camels with some sitting on their mothers' backs in a piece of cloth doing duty as a bag. The men had been chained, five or six to the same chain, their necks fixed in a strong iron ring closed by a padlock and their hands bound with palm ropes. The strongest and most resistant were tied down to the tails of horses. Women moaned and children cried. Men, in general, seemed more resigned, but the bloody cuts that the whip had made on their shoulders bore witness to their tough struggle with the horsemen of the serki (emir).

The account continues with the slaves' entry into the desert. Several caravans began their expedition together before separating and heading for different destinations: Ghadames, in modern Tunisia, Ghat, in modern south-western Libya, Fezzan, and Mtlili in modern Algeria:

> At daybreak our camels were loaded, the Negro children perched atop the baggage, the male Negroes secured by their chains in the center of the convoy and the Negro

females grouped in eights or tens under the watch of men carrying whips. The departure signal was given and the first caravan moved. It was at this point that suddenly a confused noise of cries and sobs passed from one group of slaves to another and reached our own. All, together, wept and moaned, called out and uttered farewells. They were terrified of being eaten during the journey. Some rolled on the ground, clung to bushes and absolutely refused to walk. Nothing had any effect on them, neither kind words nor threats. They could only be got up with mighty lashes of the whip and by rendering them completely bloody. Despite their obstinacy, no one of them resisted this extreme measure. Moreover, joined together as they were, the less fearful or more courageous, struggling with the weaker ones, forced them to walk.

Daumas goes on to tell how at night the women as well as the men, although kept in chains, were forced to unload the transport camels and prepare food; how during the daytime all the slaves were under constant scrutiny; and how they were compelled to carry the caravan's equipment in order to make escape more difficult. But escapes there were. One night a woman who had just given birth was freed from her chains and given a mat to sleep on. She took the opportunity to run away with her baby concealed in a basket of ostrich feathers. She was recaptured the next day hiding under a bush nursing the child. A group of six men also escaped. One had cleverly gained his master's trust and had been permitted to move about freely. He found an occasion to release the others from their chains and the six made off together. Two were recaptured the following day, one of whom was tortured for information on how the escape had been planned. Two others were attacked by a lion: they were found still chained to one other, one alive, the other dead and partially eaten. The survivor was taken back to the caravan but died almost immediately from shock. What happened to the trusted ringleader who had organized the escape no one ever discovered. Afterwards, as the caravan continued its journey, whatever hopes other slaves might have had of returning to their homelands melted away as despair set in. The slaves became, according to Daumas's informant, 'more docile,' which I take to mean resigned to their fate.[14]

Further information comes from records kept in the middle of the nineteenth century by the Italian Giambattista Gagliuffi, who was appointed in 1843 by the British Foreign Office as vice-consul in the oasis town of Murzuk, a focal point of the Saharan slave trade some five hundred kilometres south of Tripoli. Gagliuffi remained there till 1854. During his tenure the vice-consul kept records of the numbers of slaves arriving in Murzuk and provided the Foreign Office in London with annual statistics. His reports indicate that the slave trade favoured women and children over men because women and children better met the demand for domestic labour and sexual

services (by a three to two margin); that there were few slaves in transit over the age of twenty, many of whom were children; that women withstood the desert crossing as well as men and were better disposed to it psychologically; that men, but not women, were usually kept in shackles; that women fetched higher prices than men; and that slaves from the Hausa regions were preferentially regarded. Gagliuffi also recorded details of the deaths of slaves in transit. He found that slaves from Bornu who travelled on the route directly from the south had a higher rate of mortality than those from the Hausa regions who travelled a longer distance from the west before being taken north. This is what he wrote in 1843:

> The mortality of those who come from Bornu escorted by the Tibonis (Tebu) and Arabs of that region is from 20 to 50 per cent according to the season; of those who come from Soudan under the conduct of the Tuaricks [it] is from 5 to 10 per cent; these latter treat with more humanity these unhappy men: they clothe them, feed them well, and do not ill use them, and travel by short journeys. In short, on the arrival of a caravan from Soudan, the poor wretches are seen covered and in a good state – those who arrive from Bornu, on the contrary, are in a deplorable condition, naked, exhausted by fatigue, hungry and horribly maltreated; they are forced to walk, and whipped. For these reasons the mortality is greater – here they die at the rate of 3 or 4 per cent.

In later reports Gagliuffi referred to deaths from dysentery and smallpox, noting in 1847 that 160 men died from smallpox on the way from Bornu to Murzuk. He also emphasized the negligent treatment of slaves under the control of the Tebu: every one of these slaves, man and woman, he reported, was 'chained by the neck and has a hand bound to the chain by a leather thong and is compelled to carry on his head a bundle weighing 20 pounds.'[15]

Over time the scale of migration represented by the Saharan slave trade was vast. For the early Islamic period details on the numbers of slaves transported across the desert are irrecoverable. But the six main routes are thought to have produced about a thousand slaves a year. In later centuries this figure increased, to about 7000 a year from 1600 to 1800, and to a total of about 650,000 in the nineteenth century. These estimates do not take account of the separate East African trade based on the Red Sea, or of the development of the Atlantic slave trade. In the nineteenth century, total exports of slaves from Africa approximated 5.6 million. For the earlier period the estimates mean that a few hundred sub-Saharan Africans arrived on the western and central coasts of North Africa each year, a small but not insignificant number, and presumably a noticeable number. Throughout it all, Tripoli remained a final destination for caravans bringing slaves from Gao on the Niger Bend

and Bornu near Lake Chad, and a point of distribution to such destinations as Constantinople and Smyrna across the Mediterranean. It was only in the middle of the century, when the modern abolitionist movement began to have an impact, that a major change in a centuries-old pattern of desert life was felt. The British explorers Frederic and Henry Beechey, who made a pioneering journey from Tripoli to Cyrene in 1821 and 1822, wrote as follows:

> A considerable portion of the revenue of Tripoli was formerly drawn from the plunder obtained by her corsairs; and a very lucrative branch of her commerce consisted in the traffic of slaves. The humane interference, and the decisive measures, of England, have contributed to check, if not quite to abolish, these execrable sources of profit. Piracy, so far at least as we were able to learn, has been wholly superseded by commerce; and when the Tripolines find that it is more to their interest to give up their traffic in human kind than to continue it, we may hope to see this also relinquished.

They went on to say that they thought an end to the slave trade was impossible before the arrival of 'civilization' in North Africa, an obviously Eurocentric view but one that understood the traditional and continuing value of the slave trade.[16]

The oasis town of Ghadames, to which I referred above, was also an important centre on the central northern trade routes. It is mentioned in a book called *L'esclave de Timimoun* by F.J.G. Mercardier, a French official in the 1940s in the Algerian Sahara who recorded the experiences of a former slave named Griga. Griga's story, recorded when he was in his nineties, was that he had been captured in a raid on his village in south-eastern Niger by the Tuareg when he was about fourteen. He had then been taken north, with forty-three women, twenty young men and fifteen boys and girls, and sold for 200 francs at In Salah in south-central Algeria. He had worked as an agricultural labourer cultivating palms and working on *foggaras*, and after six or seven years had been set free, though he was compelled afterwards to continue to work for his former owner as a sharecropper. He told Mercardier of the special appeal to traders when he was first enslaved of young boys as potential eunuchs, and he described in horrific detail how his captors had castrated some of the boys in his original caravan, one of whom had died. The traders had been anxious to perform the procedure before reaching Ghadames because it was there, he said, that merchants came from Tripoli to buy the boys, 'at 500 francs a piece.' In modern times such activities have been glossed over, and while its slave markets can still be seen, Mulberry Square for men and boys, Little Mulberry Square for women and girls, Ghadames has inspired the anonymous author of the early twentieth-century guidebook that tourists still buy there to a romantic,

almost rhapsodic, description of the city as 'a splash of green on the golden expanse of sands,' bringing to the desert 'a touch of grace' – 'a sparkling gem, a breath of life in this desolate land.' I rather doubt that Gigra would have thought of it this way.[17]

III

Given what now appears in antiquity to be the strength and stability of the long-distance trade system controlled by the Garamantes, something of these later conditions can be imagined for the Roman imperial age. This is clearly no more than a guess. But various items of circumstantial evidence point in this direction.

First, there are hints of slave-raiding expeditions in conventional classical sources, from as early as the fifth century BC, when Herodotus (4.183) refers to the Garamantes pursuing cave-dwelling Ethiopians in chariots, to Ptolemy in the second century AD, who records two Roman military events, both obscure, that may have been related to the procurement of slaves. Under Domitian, about 86, a certain Septimius, or Suillius, Flaccus, conducted a military expedition beyond the territory of the Garamantes that lasted for three months, and some years later a certain Julius Maternus, starting from Lepcis Magna, accompanied the king of the Garamantes on an expedition against the Ethiopians from Garama to a place called Agisymba, perhaps near if not Lake Chad itself (Ptolemy 1.8,10). Second, it is notable that at Lepcis, the largest of the Roman cities in Tripolitania, a building dating from the early imperial period, sponsored by a local citizen, Iddibal Caphada Aemilius, has been identified as a possible centre of commercial exchange where slaves from the African interior were bought and sold. And a trade in African slaves, third, is certainly presupposed by the customs tax on a slave of one and a half *denarii* recorded in the early third-century tariff list from Zarai, which must have been similar to the eastern Mediterranean trade known from the Palmyrene tax decree of 137. Suggestive evidence also comes, fourth, from two ostraca found at Bu Njem, the oasis town on the south-eastern edge of the kingdom of the Garamantes that was fortified by a detachment of Legio III in the early third century. Both documents are fragmentary. But one seems to indicate that some Garamantians had brought to the Roman fort a fugitive slave named Gtasazeiheme Opter, while the second mentions *nigri publici*. The documents might refer to slaves serving the Roman garrison, but equally to slaves who were en route, as items of trade, to the Mediterranean coast. The Bu Njem documents notably have several references to camel drivers who could be associated with cross-desert traffic, and camel trains are represented, again

suggestively, in the fourth-century tomb reliefs from the Romano-Libyan settlement at Ghirza in the pre-desert region 250 kilometres south-east of Tripoli. Flight from a caravan, as seen earlier, was one of the hazards that preoccupied slaves and slave-traders alike in later eras. Finally, Pliny describes Ghadames (Cidamus in Latin), as a town *e regione Sabratae* (*HN* 5.35) – it is in fact 680 kilometres from Tripoli – and includes it among the towns said to have been subdued, probably in 20 BC, in a campaign led by the younger L. Cornelius Balbus. The town seems from archaeological remains to have had close links with Rome in the first and second centuries, and in the third century was garrisoned by a detachment of Legio III after the legion's reorganization by Septimius Severus. It was surely one of the oasis centres through which slaves from the desert passed to the cities of Roman Tripolitania.[18]

As I implied at the beginning, some of the African slaves brought across the desert are likely to have remained in Roman North Africa, while others were redirected to other regions of the Roman world. African trade with Italy, especially with Rome, is well represented by the Piazzale delle Corporazioni at Ostia, where more than a half dozen cities and towns, including Sabratha, had *stationes*. The trading stations are usually associated with the grain trade of the early imperial period. But the emblem of the *statio Sabratensium* was an elephant (still visible), which the historian Russell Meiggs, among others, in his great book on Ostia saw as an indication of a trans-Saharan trade in ivory, distributed from North Africa across the Mediterranean. I think it just as possible that ships carrying ivory from Sabratha to Ostia, or even grain from Carthage and other African points of embarkation, simultaneously carried African slaves as well. They were the sort of slaves, as Pliny again records (*HN* 35.199–200), who were transported in batches on ships, and who when they were put up for sale at Rome had their feet marked with chalk to signify that they were newly imported. A parallel might be drawn from the story of the ninth-century St Elias the Younger, who was kidnapped twice when a child by slave raiders in Sicily, first when he was twelve, the second time when he was fifteen. On the first occasion Elias was sold by his captors and was about to sail to North Africa, one of 220 slaves on board a single ship, when authority forces intervened and returned him to his parents. The second time he was taken by sea to North Africa, where he was sold to a tanner and spent forty years in slavery before he was allowed to buy his freedom. Sea transportation of the enslaved, in the opposite direction of course, to points of need must be presumed as much for the Roman imperial period as the early medieval age. A terracotta figurine of an elephant from Pompeii with a black African as its mahout, perhaps in some ways a reminder of the long ago and far away

Hannibalic War, will have reminded everyone who saw it of the periodic arrivals of new African slaves in Italy as I envisage them.[19]

Apuleius's wife Pudentilla was a rich woman. She controlled estates that produced wheat, barley, wine, and oil (*Apol.* 93). She might in type be thought to resemble the woman who appears in one of the well-known mosaics from Zliten, sitting in the shade of an olive tree, observing two workers on her farm who drive horses and oxen in a circle to thresh the pile of grain before them, and perhaps giving instructions to a third figure, possibly a bailiff. She, and Apuleius, must equally have known first-hand what it was like to see other farm operations that the Zliten mosaics record, work in the dairy and the tilling of ground by field-hands, including women workers who worked as children played before them. They must also have known what it was like to see slaves who were black. One of the workers in the Zliten threshing mosaic is darker in complexion than the others, but not necessarily Negroid. He is perhaps comparable to some of the Garamantian people. The most likely view is that the Garamantes at large varied in skin colour. But the most famous of the Zliten mosaics shows an execution scene in an amphitheatre which includes several black figures, one of whom, bound to a stake, is being savaged by a wild animal. It has long been thought that they are Garamantian prisoners captured in clashes with Roman forces. Evidently enough, the population of Roman North Africa was visually heterogeneous, and everyone knew it, including the onlookers present in the forum of Sabratha, of whom as he spoke at his trial Apuleius was at times very conscious.[20]

Accordingly, when Apuleius pilloried Sicinius Aemilianus with his black-and-white remark, he was speaking in a setting where in everyday life everyone around him was used to seeing black slaves, some of whom were the products of a trade across the desert that should now be accepted as consequential. As I see it, these slaves came to the cities of Tripolitania across the Sahara, especially the central Sahara, in numbers that, while immeasurable, were comparable to those of the very early Islamic period, significant enough to make them a familiar feature of the servile landscape; and they endured in their passage the same kinds of ordeals known from the records of the slave trade of the nineteenth century. It is impossible now to know what those who survived can have felt as they completed the last stages of their journey, leaving the bare, rocky land of the high pre-desert, descending into the coastal plains rich in olive groves and grain fields, passing, in their shackles and chains, the luxurious villas of Romano-African magnates, and arriving at last in the coastal cities that in all their Roman monumentality gave expression to a culture completely alien to them. Their destiny was to be sold as chattel, to become domestic servants, bath attendants,

camel drivers, and farm workers, or to be herded onto ships for redistribution like the caged wild animals of the amphitheatre that the African cities also sent overseas. Some of those who remained in North Africa may even have learned to worship the local gods. But their experiences were aspects of commercial life in Tripolitania that prosperous citizens like Apuleius and Pudentilla could, I think, simply take as standard. Apuleius and Pudentilla were after all precisely the sort of people who held markets on their rural estates where slave merchandise was bought and sold, who filled their properties with realistic mosaics of the kind that now help to make the black presence in North Africa detectable, and who used silver plate on their tables that might include a pepper pot in the form of a sleeping African slave.[21]

The sub-Saharan slave trade as I have proposed it is of course completely unnecessary to make sense of Apuleius's black-and-white remark. But the comment becomes much more meaningful with it. As a purely Latinate idiom that Apuleius could effortlessly toss out before his cultured judge, it illustrates at one level Apuleius's command of Roman *doctrina*. Yet understood in its specific time and place, where black connoted a servility, even an evil, that was physically embodied in the black slaves of the slave trade, visible to all, the remark helps bring to life the momentary drama of the trial in a way that can never be achieved by the standard device of compiling textual comparanda alone. For the trial was indeed a competition, full of shaming potential, as every reader of Lucius's public humiliation at the festival of Risus will know (*Met*. 3.1–12). Apuleius's 'ignorant' statement about his opponent Sicinius Aemilianus was not simply a conventional proverbial flourish; it was a charged, resonant statement full of emotional power whose full import, I suggest, lies in the particularist realities of Tripolitanian life.

10

Apuleius and Jesus

At his trial in Sabratha Apuleius was accused among other things of having cast a spell on a slave boy named Thallus in a secret ceremony that involved a small altar and a lamp. As many as fifteen slaves were alleged to have been present as assistants and witnesses. The event had apparently taken place at Oea, the city where Apuleius had met and married his wife Pudentilla, whose former in-laws, the family of the Sicinii, were responsible for the charges brought against him. While under his magical power, the boy Thallus was said to have collapsed, but thereafter to have recovered and to have remembered nothing of his entrancing experience. In defending himself, Apuleius scornfully responded that to have made the accusation more credible his opponents should have added that Thallus, while under the spell, had uttered prophecies, because there were well-attested cases on record in which this had actually happened: he knew of an episode he had read in Varro, and another that had involved Nigidius Figulus, the contemporary of Cicero. The prosecution, however, had failed to do this (*Apol*. 42–7).

All knowledge of Apuleius's trial comes from his *Apology*, the text of the speech he made in his own defence. It is self-evidently a tendentious work, either the speech actually given at the trial or a later revised and polished version. As a historical document, it is also a work of considerable importance. A trial on a capital charge before a provincial governor, in this case the proconsul of Africa, Claudius Maximus, was not a trivial affair, and there must have been substance to the charges brought. As the *Apology* and his masterpiece the *Metamorphoses* prove, Apuleius was more than familiar with the arts of magic. (He was journeying to Alexandria, a city long associated with the practice of magic, when he found himself detained at Oea by illness and came while recuperating to meet and marry Pudentilla [*Apol*. 72–3].) It should be assumed that the charge described was indeed

made, and that Apuleius countered it in more or less the way the *Apology* indicates.[1]

As already noted, this is largely to make light of and to explain away the whole business. Subscribing to a Platonist view of demons that allows for prophecy through a boy medium, Apuleius says that the child so used had to be a beautiful, uncorrupted child, whereas the slave Thallus was an ugly specimen whose tendency to collapse at a moment's notice was attributable to epilepsy: Thallus had in fact been sent to the country to protect his health and to avoid contaminating others in the household. As a result he could not be immediately produced in court. But Apuleius had sent for him, and meantime fourteen other slaves were present to confirm that he suffered from an incurable illness. The claim had also been made that Pudentilla's younger son, the boy Sicinius Pudens, was present at Apuleius's magical ceremony. His evidence, however, was beyond belief, which meant that Apuleius's opponents had in their desperation been forced to allege that the episode was only one of many similar acts; yet they had been unable to offer any proof. The charge of casting a spell was ridiculous, therefore, and his accusers knew it. Apuleius's defence, as with all the other charges brought against him, was impregnable, especially when he could maintain that he had a scientific interest in epilepsy and wanted only to cure the afflicted (cf. *Apol*. 48–52).

My interest in this essay lies not in engaging with the unanswerable question of whether Apuleius was indeed a dangerous magician, but in exploring what he takes as common knowledge around him, that the young boy in his society not only could but did serve as a medium by which the future was predicted. The admission offers clear evidence of the practice of a particular form of ancient divination. Not, however, divination of the sort sanctioned by the established procedures of Roman public religion, as Apuleius himself was to list them later in another context (*De deo Socr*. 134–7), but a clandestine form of activity dependent in Apuleius's words on the availability of a child who was 'not only handsome and healthy but also intelligent and eloquent' (*Apol*. 43: *et corpore decorus atque integer deligi et animo sollers et ore facundus*). Such a boy, it is assumed, had special powers, and was enveloped by a sense of the wondrous that followed in the first instance from his status as a child.

To validate the practice of child divination is a straightforward procedure. In the Greek magical papyri that have survived from Hellenistic and Roman Egypt there are numerous examples of magical spells in which a boy is the instrument of divination specified. The technique used involves having a boy stare into a bowl of water to mesmerize him (a magician offering appropriate magical formulae), possession of the entranced boy by gods the magician prayerfully invokes (often with strange words), and the boy's uttering of

divinely inspired answers to questions a petitioner, or a magician representing a petitioner, is anxious to pose: could an illness be cured, could you make someone fall in love with you, could you become invisible, catch a thief, win a game of dice? The questions were of a sort that commonly preoccupied men and women in classical antiquity and represent their ordinary, though nonetheless serious, concerns. The rituals were supposed to be secret, but the special capability of a boy to act as a medium was well known and unremarkable. A generation after Apuleius's trial, one particular boy was said to have foreseen the fall of Didius Julianus and the rise of Septimius Severus as emperor (*HA Did. Jul.* 7.10–11). Plutarch, much earlier, knew of a reason to account for the gift of prophecy: it was attributable to a belief that once upon a time certain children had seen the coffin of Osiris cast into the sea (*De Iside* 14).[2]

A typical example from the magical papyri gives a prayer to be uttered by a *magus* beginning, 'Open to me, O heaven, mother of the gods! Let me see the bark of Pre, he going up and going down in it, for I am Geb, heir of the gods.' It goes on to give the ingredients for making an eye ointment, starting with, 'Blood of a Nile goose; blood of a hoopoe; blood of a nightjar.' It continues with directions on how to prepare the lamp into whose flame the boy will stare: 'You should bring a clean, white lamp without putting red lead or gum water in it, its wick being of byssus; you should fill it with genuine oil or oil of dew; you should tie it with four linen threads which have not been burned; you should hang it on an eastern wall on a peg of laurel wood.' The instructions then say what to do with the boy who is to be the medium: 'You should make the youth stand before it, he being pure, he not having gone with a woman; you should cover his eyes with your hand; you should light the lamp; you should recite down into his head, seven times; you should make him open his eyes; and you should ask him, saying, "What are the things which you have seen?" If he says, "I have already seen the gods near the lamp," they tell him an answer concerning that which they will be asked.' There follows the spell to be recited while all this is going on, another invocation of gods whose names are mostly incomprehensible, ending with the prayer 'Come in to me and inquire for me about the question about which I am inquiring, truthfully, without falsehood' (*PDM* xiv. 805–40).[3]

In order to contextualize, and perhaps to explain, what I have just called a sense of the wondrous in the child, I now propose, however, to take a devious route, to make a great detour by introducing completely non-Apuleian material, but material with which, I suspect though cannot prove, Apuleius had some familiarity. It is in a sense material that does not exist, at least not in conventional form: a series of stories told orally in the early imperial age about the child Jesus of Nazareth which came to be later recorded in various

documents, the chief of which is now the non-canonical item known as the *Infancy Gospel of Thomas*. I first give some remarks about the *Infancy Gospel* and describe its contents, then consider some of its themes that seem to me valuable for the history of childhood in Roman antiquity, and finally return to the starting point of the wondrous magical child as seen in Apuleius. My object is to suggest that the accusation made against Apuleius was inherently credible by examining a body of evidence little explored by historians of Roman childhood.[4]

I

The *Infancy Gospel of Thomas* is a compilation of anecdotes attributing various miraculous acts to the child Jesus. It survives partially, in many forms and in several languages from different times and places, with versions in Greek, Latin, Syriac, Arabic, Old Church Slavonic, and many others, the earliest apparently belonging to the sixth or possibly fifth century, the latest to the later mediaeval age. No version is necessarily complete, and what the original composition looked like it is impossible to say. The stories the document records circulated in the first instance by word of mouth, and even after the first written redactions were made they continued to be orally embellished. Versions of the same stories occur in other documents, including the *Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew* and the *Arabic Infancy Gospel*, similarly non-canonical writings that appear to have had their origins as written compilations in the fifth or sixth centuries. From a much later period still there is also the *Armenian Infancy Gospel*, which draws directly on the *Infancy Gospel* itself. Read continuously, as they now can be, the stories give an unusually full, if accidental, account of the early years of a historical figure from antiquity.[5]

The *Infancy Gospel* portrays its subject Jesus as a precocious and at times utterly obnoxious child who wields enormous supernatural powers that he can exercise, like any god in the Greco-Roman pantheon, as much for ill as for good. The salvific miracle worker of the canonical gospels who restores the sick from disease and the unfortunate from misfortune has little in common with the mischievous, even venomous, practitioner of magic found here: far from a redemptive figure of faith around whom a world religion was to develop, the document presents instead what one distinguished authority has called an '*enfant terrible* who seldom acts in a Christian way!' Because Jesus was a Jew and the rise of the Jesus movement was in the first instance a development of Judaism, it might be thought that the stories concerned are of limited significance, both culturally and geographically. But the accounts of Jesus's life and teaching that survived beyond antiquity,

both canonical and non-canonical, took shape in the predominantly Greco-Roman culture of the Roman empire as a whole, and many of them were written in Greek and Latin, the principal languages of that culture. The stories also circulated widely in the Mediterranean among early Christian groups and at an early date: in oral form the stories were probably well known by the middle of the second century, the era, that is, of Apuleius, when the early Christian sects, in all their contentious variety, were well enough established across the Mediterranean to be drawing attention from Roman authorities. Local Christian groups, Gentiles as well as Jews, can be presumed to have heard them – the Greek versions indeed were addressed to Gentile audiences – and if they had any credibility at all, they must have been consistent to some degree with conventional social and cultural norms. In all their oddity, therefore, the stories become potentially enlightening sources of knowledge about assumptions concerning, and attitudes towards, children and childhood in the ancient Mediterranean world at large.[6]

What does the narrative contain? The *Infancy Gospel* records a series of miracles Jesus was said to have performed from the time he returned with Mary and Joseph from Egypt, where the family had taken refuge to escape Herod's slaughter of the innocents, until the time when his parents, returning from Jerusalem where they had celebrated Passover, realized that their son was missing and eventually found him engaged in the Temple at Jerusalem in debate with learned religious leaders. The point of departure and the point of conclusion have counterparts in canonical sources (cf. Matthew 2.13–23; Luke 2.41–50), but not the stories that intervene, which specify that the miracles took place when Jesus was between the ages of five and twelve. They seem to have been invented to supplement gaps left by canonical accounts. Here they are in summary.

When aged five Jesus was one day playing by a brook. He made some figurines of birds – sparrows – from clay. But because the day was the Sabbath he was chastised for 'working.' In response Jesus clapped his hands, told the birds to fly away, and fly away they did, to everyone's astonishment: he had magically brought the clay sparrows to life. A boy who was standing by then began to interfere with the pools of water at the brook Jesus had formed to make his clay. Jesus became angry, cursed the boy, and apparently killed him with his magic. On another occasion, another boy accidentally bumped into Jesus and hurt his shoulder. The response was the same: Jesus cursed this boy, too, and the boy immediately died. When people began to complain about his deadly assaults, Jesus struck them blind.

Because of these amazing acts the child Jesus became a notorious figure. A teacher approached Joseph and asked to let him take over the boy's education, promising to instruct him thoroughly. Joseph agreed. It turned out,

however, that Jesus knew more than the teacher and humiliated him by demonstrating his superior knowledge. He brought back to life the children he had previously killed off, but his scorn for the teacher was patent. The result was a kind of reign of child-terror: people were afraid to provoke Jesus in case he turned his magical powers against them.

Some time later, Jesus was playing with a group of children on the top of a house. One playmate fell to the ground and was killed. Jesus fell under suspicion and was blamed for the death. To vindicate himself, he brought the boy back to life and told the boy to tell the truth about how he had fallen from the roof: it had been an accident. Everyone was astonished. A few days later there was an accident of a different kind. A man cut his foot with an axe while chopping wood. The man was bleeding to death. Jesus forced his way through a crowd of bystanders, however, touched the injured foot, and at once cured the workman. The crowd began to think Jesus was divine.

Once when he was six, Mary sent Jesus to draw water from a well. On the way Jesus slipped and broke the pitcher his mother had given him in which to carry the water. Nonetheless Jesus somehow managed to draw the water, and miraculously carried it home in his clothing. On another occasion, at the age of eight, Jesus was taken by Joseph to sow grain on their land. When the harvest was ready, the seeds Jesus himself had sown produced a marvellous yield of a hundredfold, much of which was given to the local poor. On another occasion still, Joseph, a carpenter as well as a farmer, was making a bed as a special commission for a rich client. One of the pieces of wood with which he was working was too short. Jesus accordingly took the wood and magically stretched it until it was the required size. Joseph was amazed.

Two other teachers then tried to instruct Jesus. Both were overcome by his precocity, however, much like the earlier teacher. Jesus cursed the first man after he had struck Jesus in punishment, and the teacher died. The second, a more benevolent figure, managed to put Jesus in a better mood, to the extent that Jesus brought the first teacher back to life; but his teaching met with no success. Then there were three other miracles: first Jesus cured his brother James who had been bitten by a snake and was on the verge of death; next he brought back to life, by mere touch, a dead child and restored the child to its grieving mother; finally he also restored to life a workman who had died while building a house. Everyone continued to be astonished. Last of all, at the age of twelve, Jesus amazed the teachers in the Temple after his parents' Passover visit to Jerusalem.

These are remarkable items, frightening in some cases. The character they describe has little in common with the character of modern myth, a child Jesus who is meek and mild, weak and helpless. There is little here of honour and obedience, and no tears and smiles. There is certainly a 'wondrous

childhood,' though not perhaps of the kind the author of one of the most notorious examples of the modern myth of Jesus's childhood had in mind when coining that phrase. The Jesus of the *Infancy Gospel* is a child with formidable supernatural powers which he uses capriciously and indiscriminately as much to cause harm as to do good, an altogether sensationalistic and sinister figure. It is not a complete surprise to discover that he became in time a figure to invoke, together with other deities, by practitioners of magic when there was need to drive out demons.[7]

As indicated earlier, precisely when the stories of the child Jesus began to circulate is difficult to tell. The story, however, of the twelve-year-old Jesus deliberating with religious leaders in the Temple must be assumed to have a long history in view of its appearance in Luke's gospel, composed in the late first century; while the Christian bishop of Lugdunum, Irenaeus, writing in the late second century, records an encounter between the child Jesus and a teacher in which Jesus contests the teacher's knowledge in exactly the same way as reported in the *Infancy Gospel* (*Adv. haer.* 1.13.1). There is no compelling reason therefore why the stories at large could not have been known to Apuleius, or why he should have been unaware of the new religionists and the beliefs they held at large. It has long been thought that his reference in the *Metamorphoses* (9.14) to the disreputable wife of a miller who had abandoned Rome's traditional gods for one supreme deity is a reference to a Christian worshipper. There is no way to be absolutely sure: another possibility is that she had become a devotee of Judaism. But in view of the time Apuleius spent, at various stages of his life, in Carthage and other major cities, I think it impossible for him not to have had some familiarity with the emergent new cult. Some have thought that connections with a Jewish cemetery at Carthage provide evidence of a firm second-century Christian community there, where, as a boy, Apuleius had studied; and he may have still been alive and resident in Carthage in July 180 when the trial took place of the Scillitan martyrs, the first known Christian martyrs in North Africa, before the judge P. Vigellius Saturninus, of whom Apuleius was a direct contemporary. They both would have been about fifty-five years old at the time. As a young man, Apuleius had studied in Athens, and he had visited Rome before he set out for Oea. At both places, the first-century Christian circles had presumably expanded by the time of his arrival, as likewise at Corinth, which Apuleius may also have known: Lucius in the *Metamorphoses* is a citizen of that city, not of Patras as in the model on which Apuleius based his book, the *Onos* attributed to Lucian. The rise of voluntary martyrdom was bringing Christians a particular notoriety, and a notable point of contact is that the distinguished senator Q. Lollius Urbicus (*cos.* ca. 136), who was present at Apuleius's trial

in Sabratha, had earlier as city prefect presided, about 150, over the trial of three Christians, as Justin Martyr records (*Apol.* 2.2).[8]

An analogy can be drawn with the enigmatic, late second-century philosopher Celsus, who in his polemical attack on Christian beliefs and practices of about 180 shows indisputably how it was possible for a pagan to form a deep if sometimes errant knowledge of the new religion. Celsus knew for instance of some strange tales about Jesus as a disreputable magician of royal lineage, and he was evidently impressed by them. But he also knew that they were complete fabrications. There is no reason why Apuleius, a philosophizer preoccupied with all forms of religious activity, should not have been as well informed, or misinformed. Christian numbers in the middle of the second century were minuscule, a few thousands at most. But already a Christian literature was emerging, represented for example by the apologetical writings of Justin; and the impact of orally transmitted knowledge among pagans was probably high as well, the basis perhaps of much of what Celsus knew. Christians had their own forms of magic that could well have had an appeal to the author of the *Apology* and the *Metamorphoses*, and it would be interesting to know if Apuleius ever heard the story of how at Philippi in Macedonia the Christian propagandist Paul had once expelled a possessing spirit from a slave girl who had powers of divination (Acts 16:16). He certainly knew of the magical Moses (*Apol.* 90.5).[9]

II

How are the stories to be explained? Traditionally three approaches have seemed possible. First, they might be regarded as variations on generic folklore themes of great antiquity, examples of stories that might grow up almost naturally around charismatic leaders regardless of time and space. Second, and more narrowly, they might be regarded as examples of a type of anecdote that came to surround the childhood lives of the great figures of Greco-Roman antiquity, their purpose being to give signs, after the event, of children's future greatness, as in the biographies of Plutarch and Suetonius. Third, and more narrowly still, they might be regarded as records of events, or purported events, that anticipated miraculous deeds known from the adult life of Jesus that came to have, over time, a special Christological significance.[10]

Whichever line is followed, the stories of Jesus's miracles appear to make a number of assumptions about childhood in antiquity that are consistent with independent evidence. What I want to suggest therefore is that the *Infancy Gospel* echoes widespread adult views of the normative patterns of childhood life that existed when the stories were first fashioned and began

to circulate. The assumptions I have in mind are three. The first concerns the behaviour of children, the second and third the manner in which children were prepared for adult life. In each instance parallels can be drawn between details in the *Infancy Gospel* and other sources which lend the *Infancy Gospel* a degree of historical verisimilitude. This means, in turn, especially in view of the way they were widely transmitted and what has to be taken as an inherent plausibility to their audiences, that the stories of the *Infancy Gospel* can be taken in some respects, despite the sensationalistic behaviour of their central character, as testimony of how children in the Roman empire of the second century actually lived their lives.[11]

The first assumption is that childhood was a stage of life characterized by play. This may not seem extraordinary to a modern audience conditioned to make a natural link between children and the world of play; but because until the last generation childhood in the past has not always seemed to historians to constitute a distinct stage of life with its own defining features, it is an assumption of some significance. In the present climate play can easily be understood as an important feature of life by which children are socialized, at any time and in any place, yet concepts of play are specific to particular times and places. Thus George Orwell once made the observation that because 'normal healthy children enjoy explosions,' a chemistry set was a fine gift 'for an intelligent boy of about twelve,' but it did not occur to him to define what a 'normal' or 'healthy' child was when he made his remark, or to say what a fine gift for an intelligent twelve-year-old girl might have been and why a girl should not be given a chemistry set as well. Orwell had in mind when he made his observation his own childhood memories of playing with model cannons, and was lamenting, in December 1945, the unavailability of Christmas toys for children on sale in Britain. His comments unconsciously express how concepts of play and the toys associated with them are culturally determined.[12]

Several of the stories resumed earlier place Jesus in a play setting: the story, for instance, of how the sparrow figurines turned at Jesus's command into real birds and flew away. The background of the story is that Jesus was playing out of doors at a stream, the river Jordan in one version, from which he took the water for the clay he needed to make the figurines, of which there were twelve by the time a sanctimonious adult informed Joseph that his son was not keeping the Sabbath and Joseph consequently came to reprove him. Jesus was playing on this occasion in a group of children, the story taking it for granted that a five-year-old would normally play out of doors with other children. The same is true of the story in which Jesus restored to life the child who died after falling from the roof of a house. The child's name was Zeno, and he was one of several friends Jesus was playing

with this time, all of whom ran away after the accident except Jesus himself, leaving him to become the target of accusation from the dead boy's parents. (When the parents refused to believe Jesus's claim of innocence about their son's death, his response was to take a spectacular leap from the roof of the house to the ground and to bring the play companion back to life in order to reveal the truth.) It was also to play with other children that Jesus naturally went after he had restored to his grief-stricken mother the young child who had succumbed to illness. In another story not reported so far, Jesus in Egypt as a three-year-old put a dry fish in a bowl and ordered it to start breathing, and of course the fish duly came to life. The performance took place once Jesus had once more begun to play with a group of boys he had chanced to meet.

Any number of literary sources from the Roman world might be summoned to show how forms of play are associated with childhood. When Columella, for instance, gave instructions in his work on agriculture on how to grow gourds, it occurred to him to point out that gourds were useful for children learning to swim because they could be used as floats (*Rust.* 10.388). When Seneca, often an acute commentator on children, gave Lucilius advice on the dangers of making superficial value judgments, he compared the contemporary Roman taste for imported marble columns to the delight children took in finding smooth, pretty-coloured pebbles on the beach to collect (*Ep.* 115.8). And when Minucius Felix, a Christian, set the stage for his philosophical dialogue at Ostia, he thought it natural to include the detail of how boys skimmed pebbles along the water's edge (*Octavius* 3.5–6). Images of children at play like this are typical, and they suggest a rather innocent picture of childhood, as if children in antiquity lived in some sort of cocoon of sweetness and light. There is much, however, to suggest another dimension. Children could be spiteful, like those Varro knew who mocked the bow-legged (*Ling.* 9.10: the children were doubtless suffering from rickets). They could also be quarrelsome, like the sons of Septimius Severus, who antagonized each other throughout their childhood, though Caracalla's eventual murder of Geta was presumably neither inevitable nor typical (cf. Sen. *Ira* 3.34.1). Seneca uses the undelightful image of boys scaring one another when playing with masks as a way to insist that adults sometimes have to confront difficult realities (*Ep.* 24.13). The same variability of childhood behaviour appears in iconographical evidence, especially in the decorations of children's sarcophagi, where children can regularly be seen in groups, boys and girls together playing games with nuts or balls or games of leapfrog and the chase; but equally at loggerheads, jostling one another, squabbling, pulling each others' hair – all foreseeable elements, it seems, in the concept of play that Roman sculptors and their patrons shared. Many games with

balls, skittles, and hoops, like the skimming of pebbles on the seashore, were inherently competitive, and potential sources of conflict.[13]

The stories of the *Infancy Gospel* emphasize the contentious aspect of play. In the sparrow story the boy who interfered with the pools of watery clay was the son of a scribe named Annas. The story says that he 'took a branch of willow and with it dispersed the water which Jesus had collected.' He then became the victim of a tirade that hardly seems utterable by a five-year old: 'You insolent, godless ignoramus, what harm did the pools and the water do to you? Behold, now you shall also wither like a tree and shall bear neither leaves nor root nor fruit.' Small wonder that the boy immediately died. Jesus's reaction was obviously extreme, but the initial meddling by the son of Annas and the annoyance it provoked are of the same order as the pushing and hair pulling visible on Roman children's sarcophagi. Jesus's behaviour is also extraordinary in the story of the child he killed after the child ran into him and bumped his shoulder – or in one version threw a stone at him and injured him: 'Jesus was angered and said to him, "You shall not go further on your way," and immediately he fell down and died.' The premise, however, of a child running around thoughtlessly and bumping into another child is again perfectly consistent with the visual material.

Two stories from *The Arabic Infancy Gospel*, whose metamorphosing character might well have appealed to Apuleius, include special elements of mischief and alarm. They tell again of unsettling wonders worked by a child at play. In one, Jesus was playing with some children one day when he ran into a dyer's workshop and put the materials with which the dyer was working into one vat and ruined them by making them all turn into a single colour. When the dyer found out he was understandably distressed and berated Jesus. Jesus replied by saying that he could take the materials and make them any colour the dyer wished, and did so. In the second story, Jesus on another day followed a group of boys at play who purposefully hid from him. He pursued them to a certain house and asked some women who it was they could see in their furnace. The women replied that they could see three goats. Jesus commanded the goats to come out of the furnace, which, to the women's amazement, they did. The story ends with Jesus turning the goats into the boys the goats really were, saying, 'Come, boys, let us go and play.'

If therefore the stories of the child Jesus communicate in the first instance a strange sense of his violent temper and fierce retaliatory temperament, they also fit into a much broader context of children's life in the ancient Mediterranean world that can be built up from many sources. Even Jesus's moulding of the sparrows seems no more than a conventional association, because one of the most common types of toy to have survived from antiquity is precisely the animal figurine, many examples of which were doubtless

made not by children themselves, but that hardly matters. Children are also commonly shown with pet birds on their funerary monuments.[14]

The second assumption is that no matter how much time might be spent in play, children were also expected, at early ages in their lives, to perform simple tasks that benefited the families and households to which they belonged. The miracle of collecting water in his clothing was preceded by Jesus's accidental breaking of a pitcher his mother had given him with which to fetch water for the household, presumably from a local public well. (*The Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew* has it that the pitcher was broken by a child.) Jesus was supposedly six years old when the incident took place, but what is notable for present purposes is the expectation that fetching water for the household was a task normally to be expected of a boy this age. The job can be set alongside various other tasks with which young children are associated in standard sources. Columella refers to cutting down ferns, trimming vines, serving food, and stirring boiling fruit-syrup as jobs that children on the farm could do (*Rust.* 2.2.13, 4.27.6, 12.4.3, 12.42.2); Dionysius of Halicarnassus (3.70.2) had earlier thought of tending pigs. A visual sense of these simple jobs comes from a second-century statuette from Lepcis Magna, now in Tripoli, of a curly-haired little boy wearing a short-sleeved tunic, one shoulder bare, his right arm raised to his chest, carrying above his knees in the tunic's fold various pieces of fruit. The image is idealized, but it consists with the idea that young children of the lower classes were always thought capable of contributing to the household economy, if only, as in this case, by gathering or picking fruit in an orchard. Again, when Jesus saved James from imminent death after his brother had been bitten by a snake, James was gathering wood on orders from his father, a domestic chore a young boy might do every day to judge from an episode in Apuleius's *Metamorphoses*, in which Lucius the Ass is entrusted to the care of a sadistic young boy who delights in tormenting him every day as, on instructions from his mother, he gathers firewood on a local hillside (*Met.* 7.17–22). In modest households where there were no slaves to perform such tasks, the labour children contributed to the household economy was important, and the jobs children did might be thought to have inculcated in them a sense of responsibility beneficial for their adult years. (Presumably the amount of time occupied by the demands of work affected the amount of time available for play.) The miracle stories and the full Christian tradition on Jesus's family presuppose nothing but a modest family environment, and they fit with the notion that the child was an integral element in the domestic economy of the lower social orders. In turn, chores could quickly give way to real jobs, in trades and professions of many kinds.[15]

The third assumption follows naturally from the second. It concerns the preparation of the child for adult life more formally through education and

opportunities for the acquisition of skills from which an adult livelihood might be secured. The idea that the child was a malleable being, who had to be shaped, both physically and morally, into an integrated member of the adult community, was a Roman commonplace, illustrated clearly, for example, in the writings of Seneca (e.g., *Clem*. 1.14.1; *Const. Sap*. 12.1). Children were impressionable, and had to be protected from harmful influences, like those, as Lactantius noted, of the scandalous mimes (*Inst*. 6.20.30). Raising them was a process that needed much care, like the care needed according to Columella of planting and raising vines (*Rust*. 4.3.5). Providing the means for adult survival, if not success, was part of this process.[16]

Recall in this connection the story of how Jesus miraculously lengthened a piece of wood which Joseph his carpenter-father was using to make a bed, in contrast, so the *Infancy Gospel* has it, to the ploughs and yokes he usually made: 'But when one beam was shorter than its corresponding one and they did not know what to do, the child Jesus said to his father Joseph: "Lay down the two pieces of wood and make them even from the middle to one end." And Joseph did as the child told him. And Jesus stood at the other end and took hold of the shorter piece of wood, and stretching it made it equal to the other.' The story does not specify that Jesus had learned the skills of carpentry from his father, but it places him with Joseph in the working area as if this were an ordinary feature of daily life, and the ancient reader, or listener, will easily have inferred that the son had come to know something of the father's craft. To judge from the apprenticeship contracts which have survived from Roman Egypt, fathers sometimes arranged for teenaged children to learn artisanal skills from master craftsmen, especially in the weaving trade, and a similar pattern can be assumed elsewhere. Sons, however, were also expected to learn directly from their fathers. A marble relief from Pompeii shows three scenes from a smith's workshop: in the centre hot metal is being beaten on an anvil; on the right a metal object is being fashioned; and on the left, in what is probably meant to represent the first stage of the manufacturing process, a craftsman is intently weighing some metal on a pair of scales. The significant feature here is that in this first, left-hand scene a diminutive figure to the craftsman's right is looking on, a figure who is evidently a child, and who can plausibly be taken to be the craftsman's son. As Jesus and countless other children in antiquity surely did, the child is learning by observation the techniques of the craft his father commands. (In some traditions, notably, Joseph and Jesus are said to have been blacksmiths.) The pattern is represented again in a well-known fresco from the House of the Vettii at Pompeii in which the boy Icarus works with an awl and a mallet, evidently again learning his skills in the workshop of his father Daedalus.[17]

In this context it is worth emphasizing that the degree of physical labour required of the vast majority of the Roman population, in all regions and at all times, is obscured by the upper-class bias of most of the evidence now available to historians. But the truth is that most people in antiquity always needed to be working in order to provide themselves with a livelihood, and in an era of minimal technological change the transmission of artisanal skills from one generation to another was a crucial aspect of economic life. To neglect this in favour of the formal schooling possibilities open to the more fortunate, as represented for instance by the great *Institute* of Quintilian, is to misrepresent the balance of educational opportunities available to most children in Roman antiquity, and the manner in which they spent their early lives. Labour at large is an altogether under-appreciated element of ancient life. For many, perhaps the majority, its demands, together with the habit of passing down trades and skills from one generation to the next, meant that opportunities for upward social mobility were usually very limited. They also suggest that time for, and interest in, catering to the self-importance of itinerant specialists in epideictic oratory was limited. The famous late fourth-century mosaic from North Africa known as the Dominus Julius mosaic indicates what must often have been a typical mode of economic life everywhere for the majority throughout the agricultural year, with its representations of families – men, women, and children – working together on behalf of the magnates who owned the lands on which they lived, the children themselves gathering olives when in season and bringing gifts of fish to their superiors. In rural areas especially, the rhythm of the seasons dictated the patterns of labour to which children, as children, had to be inured. The relatively late date of the mosaic is testament to the longevity of cultural idioms that changed little in antiquity from one century to another.[18]

III

If a mother could assign domestic tasks to the young child, it was the father's responsibility in Roman antiquity to look to a son's education. Seneca thought of the ideal Roman father as a disciplinarian, in contrast to the indulgent mother, whose purpose it was to make sure that the child, devoid of natural powers of discrimination and easily distracted, developed into a responsible adult (*Prov*. 2.5; *Ira* 1.12.4, 2.10.1–2). The process could involve lots of correction, both verbal and physical (*Clem*. 1.14.1) – you could always beat the child into conformity if there was no response to words – and preparation involved the provision of teachers. In Petronius's *Satyricon* (46), Trimalchio's dinner companion Echion is pleased with himself for having made sure that his son was well grounded in Greek and Latin, though the

boy is also to learn a trade, barbering, auctioneering, or advocacy, something by which he will be able to support himself, unlike poetry. A father in one of Martial's poems (5.56) similarly finds *grammatici* and *rhetores* for his son, but also takes steps to equip him with practical skills as an alternative to book learning. The second-century expert in the interpretation of dreams Artemidorus thought it important to set down his knowledge in order to instruct his son in the same profession (*Oneir*. 4.pr.). The tradition was maintained at least as late as Augustine's day (cf. *Conf*. 2.3).

So it is here. There are three anecdotes concerning teachers in the *Infancy Gospel*. They differ in detail, but share some common features and may in fact be variants of a single original story. Collectively, however, they point to the conventional notion that it was a father's duty to prepare his son for adult life, for Joseph is involved in all of them as the parental figure responsible for his son's schooling. In the first anecdote, a teacher named Zacchaeus approaches Joseph and asks permission to instruct Jesus, having become aware of the boy's extraordinary behaviour and apparent intellectual potential. (The teacher's solicitation of a pupil implies that teachers in antiquity could not always automatically count on custom.) When instruction began, however, Zacchaeus found himself horribly humiliated by what seems to have been Jesus's precocious metaphysical interpretation of the first letter of the Greek alphabet. He abandoned his pupil therefore in distress. The episode is the longest in the *Infancy Gospel* as a whole, and follows an angry exchange between Joseph and Jesus, when Joseph criticizes his son for turning everyone against them by his wicked magical deeds:

> Now a certain teacher, Zacchaeus by name, who was standing in a certain place, heard Jesus saying these things to his father, and marvelled greatly that, being a child, he voiced such things. And after a few days he came near to Joseph and said to him: 'You have a clever child, and he has understanding. Come, hand him over to me that he may learn letters, and I will teach him with the letters all knowledge, and how to address all the older people and to honour them as forefathers and fathers, and to love those of his own age.' And he told him all the letters from Alpha to Omega distinctly, and with much questioning. But he looked at Zacchaeus the teacher and said to him: 'How do you, who do not know the Alpha according to its nature, teach others the Beta? Hypocrite, first if you know it, teach the Alpha, and then we shall believe you concerning the Beta.' Then he began to question the teacher about the first letter, and he was unable to answer him. And in the hearing of many the child said to Zacchaeus, 'Hear, teacher, the arrangement of the first letter, and pay heed to this, how it has lines and a middle stroke which goes through the pair of lines which you see, (how these lines) converge, rise, turn in the dance, three signs of the same kind, subject to and supporting one another, of equal proportions; here you have the

lines of the Alpha.' Now when Zacchaeus the teacher heard so many such allegorical descriptions of the first letter being expounded by the child, he was perplexed at such a reply and at his teaching and said to those who were present, 'Woe is me, I am in difficulties, wretch that I am; I have brought shame to myself in drawing to myself this child. Take him away, therefore, I beseech you, brother Joseph. I cannot endure the severity of his gaze, I cannot make out his speech at all. The child is not earth-born; he can even subdue fire. Perhaps he was begotten even before the creation of the world. What belly bore him, what womb nurtured him I do not know. Woe is me, my friend, he confuses me, I cannot attain to his understanding. I have deceived myself, thrice wretched man that I am. I desired to get a pupil, and have found I have a teacher. My friends, I am filled with shame, that I, an old man, have been defeated by a child. I suffer despair and death because of this child, for I cannot in this hour look him in the face. And when all say that I have been conquered by a small child, what have I to say? And what can I tell concerning the lines of the first letter of which he spoke to me? I do not know, my friends, for I know neither beginning nor end of it. Therefore, I beg you, brother Joseph, take him away to your house. Whatever great thing he is, a god or an angel I do not know what I should say.'

The instruction Zacchaeus proposed to give had been in part academic and in part moralistic, analogous in some respects to the early instruction given to elite Roman children by their pedagogues if not their fathers. With an ordinary pupil it would have served to perpetuate long-established social norms into the next generation. But the object of imparting lessons both in academic knowledge and social deference to a child's elders that Zacchaeus saw as an essential part of his work was defeated by an abnormal individual, whose amazing knowledge upset and turned on its head the standard social relationship between young and old: the child proved superior to the adult, and as his long lament indicates, for Zacchaeus the result was a burden of unbearable shame. All through the episode, however, it is Joseph the father with whom Zacchaeus the teacher deals: despite Jesus's phenomenal behaviour, his father is still the one society expects to supervise his son's educational development.[19]

The same expectation is evident in the second anecdote. When Jesus is growing up, Joseph recognizes his responsibility to have the boy formally schooled and entrusts him to a teacher who, although apprehensive of his pupil, decides to teach him Greek and Hebrew. The combination of a 'classical' language and a 'local' language is significant for understanding the regional particularism of the Roman empire. Again the results are disastrous. Jesus contests the teacher's knowledge – 'If you are indeed a teacher, and if you know the letters well, tell me the power of the Alpha, and I will tell you that of the Beta' – which provokes the teacher to strike him, an entirely

ordinary outcome from a Roman perspective. Jesus retaliates by cursing the teacher and then returns to his parents. Though not precisely parallel, the story is reminiscent of the tale in Lucian's *Somnium* of how the young Lucian was apprenticed to an uncle who was a stonemason and returned to his parents' house in tears on the first day of his apprenticeship, after he had accidentally destroyed a block of stone. As in this case, it had been Lucian's father who had arranged the instruction. The story also recalls the situation described by Pliny when arrangements were made for hiring a schoolmaster at his hometown of Comum because the sons of the local well-to-do were having to travel to Milan to be taught: here too it is a father who was concerned about his sons' schooling, and a group of fathers Pliny addressed on the importance of having a schoolmaster permanently settled in their community (*Ep.* 4.13). To look to their sons' instruction was an obligation that fell on fathers of all social levels.[20]

In the final anecdote, a teacher who is a friend of Joseph's tells the father to bring Jesus to his school and Joseph agrees. Both Joseph and the teacher have misgivings, but Jesus willingly attends the school until the teacher, soon aware of his inability to instruct a child who already has a remarkable knowledge of Jewish law, despairs of his pupil and asks Joseph to take him home: 'Know, brother, that I took the child as a disciple; but he is full of much grace and wisdom; and now I beg you, brother, take him to your house.'

Now this last item might be taken to suggest, as noted earlier, that the stories of the *Infancy Gospel* and related texts preserve notions of exclusively Jewish conventions and practices, rather than assumptions about social life in the wider Roman world – that the stories of the *Infancy Gospel* have something to do, that is, with Jewish cultural history. The religious and moral content of Judaism was transmitted to children in part through teaching in the synagogue, but it was within the family as well that children heard of their religious traditions and accompanying obligations, learning for instance on what days and at what seasons of the year they could and could not work, what company they might and might not keep while eating, and what sorts of foods they could and could not eat. For the most part, consequently, Jewish children had to grow up aware of their religious distinctiveness, given the intense inculcation to which they were exposed from their earliest years. But this reference to Jewish law and the complaint about working on the Sabbath apart, both of which are unlikely to have been objectionable to Gentile Christian audiences, there is nothing that I can identify to suggest a particularly Jewish character to the stories of Jesus's childhood at large. Jewish parents shared with others a responsibility to prepare their children for adulthood, the same emphasis falling on the father's role as in other ancient Mediterranean communities. As one rabbi put it, 'A

man is obliged to teach his son a trade, and whoever does not teach his son a trade teaches him to become a robber.' Schools in any institutional modern sense were as non-existent in Jewish society as they were elsewhere, and artisanal training was the most for which most Jewish boys, as most boys generally, could hope. Outside elite circles literacy is unlikely to have been widespread. The Hellenizing Jewish historian Josephus came by his own account to command a great reputation for learning as a child, and by the age of fourteen regularly gave advice to priests and civic leaders (*Vita* 8–10). As far as I can judge, however, he was an extreme example, a child who owed his learning to his high social status as much as to whatever special aptitudes he happened to possess.[21]

IV

It has been said that the *Infancy Gospel* is a work of no historical value. In the sense that the miracle stories cannot be taken at face value, as evidence of 'facts,' this is true. The stories add nothing to the biography of the historical Jesus. But the positivistic view of history an opinion of this sort implies is unacceptably limited. Regarded as a socio-cultural document, the *Infancy Gospel* has considerable historical value in that its assumptions about social reality promote understanding of how children in antiquity lived their lives, regardless of the strange behaviour of its central character. This conclusion is confirmed by the point, observed earlier, that the stories were intended for and circulated among Gentile audiences stretching across the entire Mediterranean world, whose members had to find comprehensible the contexts in which the wondrous deeds of the child Jesus supposedly took place. The *Infancy Gospel* has to be recognized accordingly as a historical source that makes an important addition to knowledge of childhood in antiquity. If, however, the themes of socialization and education that underlie the miracle stories are comparable to much other material on childhood in Roman sources, it follows that in some manner the wondrous deeds themselves have to be taken seriously, to be acknowledged as somehow credible, not in the sense that they took place as literally recorded, although some people must have thought that they did, but in the sense that a child could be associated with the wondrous.[22]

Miracle working in antiquity was understood to be a common phenomenon. Everyone will recall how Vespasian, according to Tacitus (*Hist*. 4.81), in Alexandria in the year 70, like Jesus in the gospels, cured both a blind man, by applying spittle to the man's cheeks and eyes, and a man with a crippled hand, by stepping on it, despite the initial scepticism of the down-to-earth new emperor about his capacity to heal the sick his local supporters

attributed to him. Yet miracle working in antiquity is not frequently associated with children. Of the infant Augustus it was said that he once commanded some noisy frogs at his grandfather's country villa to be silent, and that no croaking frogs were ever heard there again. But this is a story not of a miracle per se: Suetonius, who records it (*Aug*. 94.7), includes it in a list of omens and portents anticipating Augustus's future greatness and good fortune (cf. 94.1). It seems self-evident in the end that the miracle stories attributed to the child Jesus were intended above all to mark out the special significance of the post-Resurrection figure who by the middle of the second century had become to some, if only a few, a figure of enormous religious power. Yet exactly why some of the stories were so negative it is difficult to tell, except that they reflect views of how children were sometimes realistically perceived as petulant, cruel, vindictive – full in Orwell's memorable phrase of a 'horrible selfishness.'[23]

Miracle working nonetheless is closely associated with the practice of magic. The two indeed formed closely related elements that shaded into one another on the spectrum of beliefs and practices that constituted ancient religion. And children in antiquity, boys especially, had magical associations. Everyone again will recall Horace's poem on the witches of the Esquiline who used parts of a dead boy's body for their magical concoctions (*Epod.* 5). And if that were thought to be a product simply of the literary imagination, the same cannot be said of the more prosaic, but equally sensationalistic, evidence for the use of the boy as a medium for predicting the future as represented by the magical papyri and, to return to my point of departure, by Apuleius in the *Apology*. The child, any child, could embody something of the wondrous. So in Philostratus's *Life of Apollonius*, a sixteen-year-old boy is possessed by a demon, for two years, and speaks, amazingly, with the demon's voice: it is the spirit of his father, reproaching his mother for having married a new husband just three days after the father's death (*VA* 3.38–9). The miracles attributed to Jesus, the bad as well as the good, and the clearly understood capacity of some boys to serve as prophetic mediums were variations on a theme: a perception that the child, any child, was in some ways an object of wonder or mystery.

How is this to be explained? One answer is to point to the marginality of the child in ancient Roman society. As unformed and no more than potential members of the adult civic community, children waited, as it were, in the wings of society and were capable of the extraordinary as a result. Yet because children were, by nature, unable to assume adult roles, it may not altogether be the case that they were thought of in real life as marginal, especially when, as has been seen, the evidence of concern to prepare them for integration into adult roles, at all social levels, is so persuasive and consistent

over time. Children were indeed visible everywhere, in all senses, and as far as I can tell were no more and no less marginal than women and slaves. The attempts that were made to protect them from illness and other forms of harm through the regular provision of magical amulets and the offering of prayers are just one set of indications of how intrinsic to society children were often thought to be.[24]

Another answer is to point to the innocence of the child, the idea that, again, as unformed beings children had not learned the immoral practice of lying, and so when used as mediums by magicians they told the truth as a matter of course because nothing else was possible. There is some support for this idea in Artemidorus's book on dream interpretation, which describes children as innocent for this very reason (*Oneir.* 2.69). It fits with the requirement sometimes found in the magical papyri, as in the example paraphrased at the outset, that the boy used as a medium should be sexually pure. And Apuleius himself says in the *Apology* (43.3) that it is the boy who is pure or honest in his soul (*simplex*) who is the boy capable of being hypnotized. Once more, however, this seems to me an idealizing view, akin to idealizing representations of families and family values in ancient works of art, as for instance in a beautiful relief in Verona of C. Silius Bathyllus that shows a nuclear triad of father, mother, and son in affectingly deep attachment. As seen earlier, there is considerable evidence to show that childhood was not regarded as a state characterized by innocence alone. Witness once more Seneca, whose statement that bad behaviour in children is irreproachable because children know no better, expresses by definition a view of children's lack of moral purity and the need consequently to shape them appropriately. This could be done, but it was a process that took time, and the results were not always guaranteed (*Const. Sap.* 11.2). (In rather harsh vein, Seneca said that society could not afford to expend its resources on children who showed abnormalities, who lacked the potential to become the fully fashioned members of society he thought society required [*Ira* 1.15.2]). Galen, moreover, saw contradictory features in children who had received the same upbringing, and contrary to Stoic views believed that shaping of a Senecan kind could not overcome the natural tendency to wickedness some children demonstrated: 'Some small children show great cowardice and timidity; some are insatiable and gluttonous, others quite the opposite; some are completely lacking in shame while others are modest; and there are many other such differences besides these' (816–17K; 768K). Childish innocence could not be taken for granted, which means that the selection of an innocent boy as a magical medium was not as straightforward an operation as it might seen. Certainly with Apuleius's Thallus there was the special difficulty that no one thought of a slave as anything but inherently corrupt, a

reality symbolized in the description of Thallus as utterly ugly, no matter that this was due in part to disease.[25]

A complementary explanation might be found in connecting the wondrous character of childhood with the demographic realities of Roman antiquity. It has often been observed that life for the majority of people in the pre-modern past was 'nasty, brutish and short.' This was as true of Rome as anywhere. The hope might be that generations would die in serial order, but the predictable unpredictability of death was, in fact, a permanent condition of Roman life, as Lactantius understood: 'Death rages without regard for morality, rank or age, some people reaching old age and others being taken in infancy, some dying in their full maturity and others removed in the first flower of youth with untimely deaths' (*Inst*. 3.17.8). Why this was so was difficult to explain. But one defining anxiety to which Roman adults were constantly exposed as a result was the susceptibility of their children to untimely death, the extent of which was enormous. It was for this reason that a wide range of dreams could be taken as portents of their loss, and that children had their own protective deities.[26]

How parents reacted to the early loss of children defies generalization. Grief is a universal human emotion, but universals express themselves differently in different historical settings. Some Roman parents felt extreme pain when their children died, as can be attested in many ways. I am not altogether convinced, however, that an experience that was to some extent foreseeable did not at times produce reactions that from a modern, Western perspective might seem uncaring, especially when in a pre-Christian society parents did not have to agonize over the fate of their dead children's souls. A literary critic today finds it impossible that a young mother in a modern novel should express relief on realizing that it is her son, not her lover, who has been killed in an accident. Yet speaking of Britain in the late nineteenth century, Orwell (once more) noted how people reacted even at that late date to the common early deaths of children with indifference, before, that is, untimely child death in the Western world of the post-war era had become so extraordinary. It is the vulnerability itself, however, of Roman children to early death that is so important, as attested in incidental remarks like those of Lactantius (echoing Epicurus), and confirmed by arguably the last generation's greatest advance in Roman social history, the establishment of a demographic profile secure enough, whatever the variability of details, to make the reality of massive infant and child mortality unquestionable. Disease was one of the greatest hazards involved, but there were other risks too, as Apuleius knew: Fortuna reigned supreme, and even adult children might suddenly die and bring a family's history to an end, or else a child thought to be poisoned might unexpectedly be restored to life (*Met*. 9.35–8; 10.12). It

was in this area of the unpredictable, I suggest, in the unpredictability of any child's survival to adulthood, that the real mystery and wondrous character of childhood lay, and that the potential was created for children to function as instruments of divine agency, to express in their own special way the will of the gods, or even in extreme cases to perform miracles. Recall in this connection that the wonder-worker Jesus is said to have brought back to life a child who had died an untimely death from illness and to have restored the child to its mother; the death was part of the mystery in which all children were implicated. It should not be surprising that Jesus should eventually be invoked for various kinds of aid and assistance in magical spells.[27]

As for Apuleius himself, no one is ever likely to know the truth of what took place at Oea with the slave boy Thallus. Epilepsy, the disease from which Apuleius said the boy suffered, was the sacred disease, an illness that could be popularly accounted for only by recourse to divine possession – the least deniable of causes – whatever the more rational views doctors and philosophers sometimes held. The boy's physical symptoms can only have increased the suspicions Apuleius aroused. In the end it does not matter whether Apuleius was or was not a practitioner of magic. He was remembered as such in a later age by Christian writers (cf. Lactant. *Inst.* 5.3.7), as Jesus was by others, but that has little bearing on what took place in his own lifetime. As a learned outsider in a provincial community who entangled himself in the affairs of an elite family preoccupied with the protection of property, a community where gossip was rife and stories of the supernatural common, he was perceived as capable of drawing on the mysterious power of a boy who was by definition a marvel, and it was perception that mattered most. There were grounds for thinking the same about the other charges brought against him. To establish this point, I have wanted to evoke something of the character of childhood in the Roman world, and to recover in the process a thread in the texture of Roman life. This I take to be a worthwhile historical project. The accusation that Apuleius used the boy Thallus for magical purposes and the magical stories of the child Jesus draw on a common stock of assumptions about children in antiquity and have a mutually reinforcing convergence. The image of the Dionysiac child who reads from a scroll in the fresco from the Villa of the Mysteries at Pompeii comes irresistibly to mind as a visual symbol of what I have suggested.[28]

Postscript

The relevance of the Greek magical papyri to understanding the *Apology* has been clear since Abt (1908), though the material now available is greater than it was a century and more ago. Together with *defixiones*, dream-books,

and oracles, the magical papyri take the historian to the heart of widespread popular beliefs about the relationship between everyday human desires and divine, especially occult, power – to a world, that is, of popular religiosity. Here is a list of elements found in the papyri that I think are noteworthy, apart from matters related to divination with boys and the magical capacities of fish (see chap. 1).

1. Linen is the fabric ubiquitously prescribed for magic ritualistic practice. It can be used to conceal sacred objects or amulets, as a substance on which to write spells, as a sheet to put on the ground for the practitioner of magic to lie on (sometimes naked), as a covering with which to envelop a boy medium or simply to drape a lamp. Linen is the fabric in which the virgins and gods who will appear when a Mithraic epiphany ritual is employed are expected to be dressed.

2. The sacred objects kept in linen wrappings are sometimes figurines, which are common items of ritualistic apparatus. Frequently the figurines are images of gods: Apollo, Selene, Eros, Hermes. They can be made from various substances, such as beeswax, but prescriptions for wooden images and particular types of wood, are conventional: laurel for Apollo, olive for Selene, mulberry for Eros. If not themselves made from wood, figurines can be kept in wooden shrines: juniper for a human figurine, lime-wood for an image of Hermes. One type of figurine is that of a skeleton.

3. Other ritualistic paraphernalia include a concoction for which juniper and ebony are needed, or else a staff made of ebony. One love-spell specifies that ebony is the wood of Hermes, the god 'in charge of the power of understanding by which everything is managed,' the patron of public speaking with justice in his province, and who as Hermes Trismegistos is the 'chief of all magicians.'

4. Magical rituals are to be practised, unsurprisingly, at night, sometimes beneath a full moon. They frequently require animal sacrifice in the form of burned offerings. The animal of choice is the rooster, which can be specifically sacrificed to Hermes. In one example, its head is to be cut off first, its body then consumed by fire on an altar.

5. The instruction accompanying one magical formula, 'So keep this in a secret place as a great mystery,' is enough to indicate the furtiveness of magical practice.

6. The divinities invoked in spells, whether named or not, are regularly addressed or described as *basileus*. For instance, 'O king of the heavenly gods'; 'The king of all, ruling alone'; 'King of kings'; 'King of the heavens;' 'King Osiris.'

This list of items is not randomly compiled. Apuleius was accused of having secretly kept mysterious objects wrapped in a linen cloth; of having

engaged in mysterious night-time rituals that left a residue of soot deposits from torches and feathers from birds; of having had a wooden figurine in the form of a skeleton that he called his king, which turned out, he said, to be a statuette given to him as a gift. It was nonetheless a figurine of Hermes-Mercury, made from ebony, though whether his 'king' he refused to admit.

The correspondences cannot be accidental. They render comprehensible accusations that otherwise seem trivial, if not absurd, especially in view of Apuleius's cerebral explanations of them, with full recourse to Plato and other giants of the literary and philosophical canon. The explanations sometimes impinge on the baffling world of Hermetism – theoretical not technical, I think – that I simply do not understand. The correspondences provide nonetheless a basis for imagining how it was at Sabratha that an appeal was made for the intervention of the proconsul against Apuleius. The words of Thamyris to Paul come to mind: '"You have destroyed the city of the Iconians, and my betrothed, so that she will not have me. Let us go to the governor Castellius!" And the whole crowd shouted: "Away with the sorcerer! For he has corrupted all our wives"' (*Acts of Paul and Thecla* 15).[29]

11

Lucius and Isis: History in Apuleius's *Metamorphoses*

It is true, and very important to the social historian, that the spontaneous assumptions in the literature of any age, the behaviour of the minor characters, the conventions against which irony and humour must be understood, reveal with great precision facts of considerable interest about the structure of society … But it is indeed hazardous to infer an institution or a habit characteristic of a whole society or a whole era from the central character of a literary work and its story, from *Pamela*, for example, or from Elizabeth Bennett in *Pride and Prejudice* just as much as from Juliet or Viola.

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Exhausted on the beach at Cenchreae, the Ass is visited by a presence he comes to realize is divine, and prays for release from the cruel misfortunes that have haunted him for so long. The presence has no name but is clearly a goddess. Identity is soon disclosed and prayer for relief from suffering is answered: in a second vision the Queen of Heaven makes herself known and instructs the Ass on how to recover his human form. Her powers are miraculous: the re-formed Lucius commits himself to the service of his saviour Isis, seeking and welcoming initiation into her mysteries; and, a year later, after a voyage to Rome, he enters the mysteries of her consort and superior Osiris as well. Lucratively working as an advocate, the one-time Ass, now an acolyte of the Egyptian god, baldly but happily takes his leave of the reader he first set out to entertain with his desultory stories of metamorphosis.

Book 11 of Apuleius's *Metamorphoses* brings the story of Lucius's magical transformation into a beast of burden to a redemptive conclusion. The shameful, humiliating ordeals suffered as penance for a reckless pursuit of false knowledge and sexual pleasure are overtaken by the joy of Lucius's return to human shape and the ecstasy he comes to know from communing

with the divine. The final book, that is to say, has an indisputably happy ending, as a novel should. Nevertheless in this essay I want to suggest that from a historical perspective the happy conclusion of Lucius's story is deceptive and that the final book of the *Metamorphoses* bears on reflection a profoundly pessimistic meaning. My case depends on exploring the implications of a simple but, I think, important contrast between the narrative of the final book and the narrative of the earlier ten books. It can be defined as a contrast in agency. First I describe the nature of the contrast and afterwards I consider its ramifications. My contention, to draw on the vocabulary of the epigraph, is that when the socio-cultural assumptions of Apuleius's text are pursued and contextualized, a costly price can be seen to be paid for Lucius's final happiness that implies for Roman society in the second century a bleak and disturbing prospect, no matter that much of the argument relies on the story of the central character. I take it as given that the *Metamorphoses* is first and foremost a historical document that must express something of the society and culture in which it was produced, and that the story of Lucius is set in the Roman world of the high Antonine age.[1]

I

In the early stages of the *Metamorphoses* the young Corinthian nobleman Lucius is presented as a man of initiative and independence in full control of his actions and reactions. Motivated by an insatiable inquisitiveness and a love of novelty (*Met.* 1.2), he is first met travelling in Thessaly en route to the city of Hypata. Precisely why is never made clear. Lucius makes his own decisions as circumstances arise. He insists that fellow travellers share with him their past history (1.3); he seeks out the house of his host Milo the moneylender and duly accommodates himself (1.21–4), taking full advantage of the sexual availability of Milo's slave girl Photis, but being careful not to cause offence by seducing Milo's wife Pamphile (2.6–10); he engages in social intercourse with Milo and his relative Byrrhena as occasion and propriety demand (e.g., 1.26, 2.3, 2.11–15, 2.19–20); and late one night, although under the influence of wine, he forcefully accosts a band of robbers he believes to be attacking Milo's house (2.32). There is nothing in any of this to suggest a lack of initiative. Some situations embarrass Lucius, as when a civic official in Hypata, a one-time school friend, inadvertently deprives him in the town square, naif as he is, of his dinner and the cash paid for it (1.24–5); or, more tellingly, when he unwittingly becomes an object of public ridicule at a local festival and is arrested and put on trial, as he thinks, for murder (3.1–11). Social intercourse, moreover, can require deference of him (1.26). But this does not affect the basic point. Even in the apparent

crisis of his 'trial' Lucius draws on great resources of education and imagination to mount a vigorous defence (3.4–6), and once the ruse by which he has been duped is revealed, his will to pursue novelty remains as strong as ever (3.14). His discovery from Photis that access to the special novelty of magic is close at hand compels him first to contrive a way to observe a practitioner who turns herself into a bird and flies away – Pamphile as it happens – and then to obtain materials for first-hand experimentation (3.19–23). The result is disaster: Lucius becomes an ass rather than a bird (1.24), but it is disaster in the active voice.

Lucius the Ass retains the human mind of Lucius the Corinthian noble. But he can no longer speak with a human voice or fully control his fortunes. Nonetheless he still preserves decision-making powers. His conversion to animal form has the effect of turning him into a slave-like commodity, subject to the will of those into whose power he falls; yet in one circumstance after another, no matter how shaming, dangerous, or desperate, he continues to display initiative, sometimes following reasoned and logical mental debate, sometimes opportunistically, all in an effort to extricate himself from the difficulties of the moment, and, especially, to find the antidote – roses, as he learns from Photis (*Met.* 3.25) – that will change him back to human form. Like a slave responding to the rigours of slavery, he finds ways not to do the work to which he is assigned: running away from his owners, humiliating and stealing from them, contemplating suicide as a way of escaping his predicament, deciding to do nothing as a better course of momentary (in) action. On one occasion, he purposely sets off in search of the life-restoring flowers, only to be disappointed (4.1–2), and on another he deliberately abandons an opportunity to eat them, if with Jupiter's aid, because the timing is wrong (3.29). Despair sometimes obtrudes, but it is not overwhelming. When finally the prospect of having to have sex with a woman in public threatens him with what he considers to be the ultimate degradation, even raising in him a fear of death, Lucius consciously decides to flee and does so as an act of human calculation, not animal instinct (10.34–5). The misfortunes that plague and reduce him to a state of animalized servility are the work of the malicious goddess Fortuna, but neither his will nor his capacity to resist are destroyed. As so often in the real life of Roman society, the slave's active, contesting voice remains dominant.[2]

Lucius in Book 11 is to my mind a completely different figure. He does not altogether lose his deliberative faculties. Having for example been instructed by Isis to undergo initiation into her cult, he hesitates and reflects on the obligations and demands the initiation involves in language reminiscent of earlier moments of decision making (*Met.* 11.19; cf. 10.34). In the final book as a whole, however, sustained obedience to external authority becomes a

strikingly new aspect of his demeanour. The active power of inquisitiveness (*curiositas*), seen as late as the episode when he is torturously put to work in a mill (9.12, 9.13), now disappears as the Ass is directed in a sequence of visions to follow without question one set of instructions after another, variously *imperia*, *praecepta*, or *monitus*; and while the visions are broadly comparable to the earlier visitations of Fortuna, presenting contingencies over which Lucius has no direct control but to which he must respond and react, the divine commands the visions bring have the effect of transforming Lucius, both as animal and man, from active agent to passive subject. No longer is his response one of resistance to, or calculated temporary accommodation of, the trials brought by a cruel fate, but instead one of willing acquiescence in the quite literal servitude required of him by Isis and Osiris. Subjection to the gods' will replaces trust in his own, and in the metamorphosis from animal to human, irrational faith, ironically, comes to replace reason. The change from active to passive complements the change in tone that, literary critics agree, differentiates the final book, in all its sombre mystery, from the books that precede.[3]

The first vision occurs on the beach at Cenchreae, the site of the Ass's refuge from the sex show that was to be put on in Corinth. It is the point at which I began. Physically and mentally drained, the Ass has fallen asleep, but during the night he suddenly awakes in a state of dread, aware of the all-embracing presence around him of a cosmic force. He decides, actively, to purify himself and to pray to the goddess he takes the presence to be, asking for release from his manifold travails through a return to human shape, or, if this is impossible, through death (*Met.* 11.1–2). His prayer is presumably offered in silence because he cannot speak, although the suggestion has been made that the goddess at this point gives the Ass a human voice. The prayer is almost immediately answered when sleep is again interrupted and the goddess reveals herself to Lucius as the supreme Isis. This time instructions (11.5: *imperiis*) are given for his restoration to human form: transforming roses will be available the following day from a priest taking part in the celebration, under Isis's purview, of the opening of the new sailing season; the Ass is to make his way through the crowd of celebrants gathered for the ritual and will duly eat the magical flowers; the priest Mithras, forewarned by Isis, will understand what is happening and the crowd will accept the miraculous conversion without demur. (The relevant terms in the text are *meo monitu*, *praecipio*, and *meo iussu* [11.6; cf. 11.14, *diuino monitu*]). As he wakes from his sleep, the Ass is emotionally distraught, but consciously reviews Isis's commands (11.7: *imperiis*; cf. *monitionis ordinem*). The day of celebration dawns and the miracle of metamorphosis the goddess has ordained takes place (11.13). Lucius, accepting the divine will, is born again.[4]

Isis's beneficence has not been gratuitous. From the outset she makes clear when instructing the Ass that as the re-formed Lucius he must offer her something in return for his new life. She will protect and confer happiness upon him and will grant him favour even in death, perhaps extending his life beyond fate's decree, but the price required for this attractive offer is high: Lucius must obey her – the key phrase is *sedulis obsequiis* – worship her, and live a life of chastity (*Met.* 11.6). He must in other words display an unswerving devotion to her for the rest of his life (11.25: *perpetuo*). Subsequently the priest reminds the re-formed Lucius of what he has to do to retain the goddess's goodwill: enrol as an Isiac soldier, take an oath of allegiance to her, obediently dedicate himself to her cult, and voluntarily shoulder her yoke of service – for to become Isis's slave (again the idiom is ironic) is to enjoy the fruit of freedom: *teque iam nunc obsequio religionis nostrae dedica et ministerii iugum subi uoluntarium. nam cum coeperis deae seruire, tunc magis senties fructum tuae libertatis* (11.15: '"Dedicate yourself now to the discipline of our faith, and submit yourself as a volunteer to the yoke of our ministry. For once you begin to serve the goddess, then you will really experience the enjoyment of your liberty"'). The terms of the exchange are terms from Lucius's point of view of submission and self-denial, of suppressing his will as an individual to that of Isis, and of identifying himself with the animalized slave he has just (he thinks) ceased to be. But Lucius is willing to pay the steep price, and once the ceremony of the sailing season is over and the concourse of worshippers has dispersed, he is left contemplating a statue of Isis, not only the goddess of travellers at sea but now his personal saviour, and the slave-owner who, as 'the mistress of the whole world' (11.7: *orbisque totius dominam*), has come to own him.[5]

He soon enters her service, what he calls her *seruitium* and *ministerium* (*Met.* 11.15, 11.19, 11.21), vocabulary that is obviously pejorative in association. Lodging is taken in the grounds of Isis's temple at Cenchreae, the company of priests is kept, cultic activity is continuous. In visions that occur each night and sometimes during the day Isis repeatedly commands Lucius to be initiated into her mysteries. Phrases in the narrative such as *monituque ieiuna* and *crebris imperiis* (11.19) are typical. A trace of deliberative hesitation remains: the spirit is willing, but the cult's demands induce fleshly weakness because the obedience sought of him (11.19: *religionis obsequium*), the physical sacrifices necessary, and the self-regulation involved are formidable prospects. But a new vision brings resolution. Lucius sees the high priest of Isis offering him bounty. It turns out to be a portent of material gain as Lucius's slaves return to him from Hypata with his horse (11.20). His again ironically subservient, infantilizing desire for initiation duly intensifies – observe the phrase *immaturis liberorum desideriis* (11.21: 'the

immature impulses of … children') – yet the high priest counsels passive forbearance on Lucius's part (11.21: *obseruabili patientia*), because initiation can occur only on the instruction of Isis herself (11.21: *deae nutu*; cf. *iubente domina*). Again, it is as if the orders of a slave-owner to a slave have to be awaited: she alone can prescribe the financial cost of initiation; the voluntary death and saving grace of the mysteries can come only at her precept (11.21: *simili praecepto, nec non iussus*); and like other cultists Lucius must prepare by fasting. More and more, the emphasis falls on abnegation of the self, on impassively waiting for the goddess's directions, on subordinating human wishes to divine dictate. And Lucius succumbs in a manner never seen during his earlier struggles with Fortuna. Servile dutifulness (*obsequium, ministerium*) is exhibited in calm and silent cultic service (11.22), until once more at night Isis appears and prescribes in new orders (11.22: *non obscuris imperiis, beniuolis praeceptis*) the day and the costs of Lucius's entrance to her cult, together with the name of the priest who will preside over it. It is of course the high priest Mithras, who expects to receive his own orders from the goddess (11.22: *diuinis imperiis*). At his trial at Hypata Lucius had once mournfully complained of being treated as a sacrificial victim and had boldly withstood the assault made against him (3.2, 3.4–6). Now, in deference to Isis's commands and with further secret instructions from the priest (11.23: *mandatis*), he prepares for initiation as a compliant victim and purifies his body by bathing and fasting. A self-imposed and again essentially passive continence (11.23: *continentia*) replaces the earlier spirit of defiance.[6]

The moment of ecstasy is soon experienced. Lucius triumphantly journeys through the cosmos in a transport of joy. But his journey is the transport also of a being whose human individuality is obliterated as he enters the company of fellow soldiers (*Met.* 11.23: *religiosa cohorte*) and is revealed in due course to the public in his Olympian stole (11.24). This time there is no sense of shame to drive him from the scrutiny of the crowd as had happened at Corinth. Instead, wrapped in the radiant robe of the Sun, the transformed initiate becomes an anonymous item of wondrous display, a virtual statue whose epiphany demands by definition an objectifying gaze, a figure as lifeless as the statue of Isis before which he stands. The phrases *in uicem simulacri* and *in aspectum populus errabat* (11.24: 'like a statue,' 'the people crowded in to gaze at me') make crystal clear his full conversion into an object.[7]

A year passes before the next major divine visitation (*Met.* 11.26–7). Lucius has left Cenchreae, first to return to Corinth and then to take up residence in Rome, journeys both undertaken at Isis's behest (11.24: *deae monitu*; 11.26: *deae potentis instinctu*). Independent decision making is nowhere to be seen. He acts or reacts only when acted upon, and always

compliantly. Isis's message this time is unclear, but through reflection and the counsel of fellow initiates, Lucius realizes that he is now being sought as a servant of the god Osiris – the passive construction (*peti*) and servile vocabulary (*famulum*) are important (11.27) – whose mysteries he must also enter. The situation is clarified when in yet another night-time vision a devotee of Osiris brings signs of the gods' – not Lucius's – wishes. The devotee is Asinius Marcellus, a figure who knows what must be done because of an instructive vision he himself has had (11.27: *praeceptum*; the parallel with Mithras earlier is obvious). Lucius finds him next day. Preparations for a second initiation are accordingly made, with Lucius completely and yet again passively at Isis's disposal. As he inactively puts it: *numinis premebar instantia* (11.28: 'The god continued to press me relentlessly'). To raise the fee needed he sells his clothes, another act not of his own devising but one that follows still more divine instruction (11.28: *iussus*; cf. *praeceptum*). Finally, he is initiated, and full of assurance (11.28: *plena iam fiducia*) shows Osiris the same servile obedience (11.28: *obsequium*) paid earlier to Isis.

The enslaved Lucius is soon given still more directions from the gods (*Met*. 11.29: *mirificis imperiis deum*) and told to undergo a third initiation. Once again, passive verbs are prominent in the narrative: *interpellor, cogor* (11.29). Lucius is distressed and perplexed, but his anxiety is relieved when a benign apparition issues clarifying commands (11.29: *instruxit*; cf. *deis magnis auctoribus*). In order to prepare himself, and in language both servile and bestial, Lucius immediately submits to the yoke of the fast (11.30: *castimoniae iugum subeo*), and once more considers no alternative response. Within days Osiris himself appears to Lucius, tells him that he is to continue to plead legal cases in the forum without fear of criticism, and appoints him as an acolyte and an administrator of his cult. It is at this point, at last, that Lucius concludes his story, rejoicingly – *gaudens obibam* (11.30) – but in complete thrall to the god.[8]

II

No reader can leave Book 11 of the *Metamorphoses* without feeling that Lucius's story ends positively. The text is replete with the vocabulary of joy, and if the voluptuous ending to the tale of Cupid and Psyche in the middle of the work lingers in the mind, no reader is likely to expect anything other than an eventually pleasurable resolution of Lucius's predicament, no matter how horrible the tortures he suffers along the way. The summary of the final book I have just given, however, is enough, I think, to establish two important items that point in a different direction: first, Lucius's total slave-like submission to Isis and Osiris, and second, the total loss of

cognitive independence that follows his initiations. The Egyptian mysteries offer peace and tranquillity, rebirth, and a new life, but they also insist on a true servitude, and a servitude far more comprehensive than that to which Lucius the Ass had been reduced because it is voluntary and unresisting. Isis is much more successful than Fortuna had ever been in enslaving Lucius: the language of servitude, of command and obedience, is everywhere. The *obsequium* (obedience) that Isis and Osiris impose on Lucius is especially noteworthy because on the evidence of the *Metamorphoses* alone the word expresses, in various contexts, the self-denying deference fundamental in a traditional, authoritarian world where asymmetrical personal relationships are all-pervasive: *obsequium* is the ideological force that binds society together, requiring compliance of the inferior to the superior party – an *ancilla* to her *domina* (*Met.* 6.5, 6.12, 6.20), a stepson and half-brother to a father's wife and son (10.3), a soldier to a commanding officer (10.13), a wife to her husband and a son to his mother (10.23), a sister to her brother (10.24). The mysteries demand also a flight from reason as plain as Lucius's flight from the sex spectacle at Corinth, a blind trust in revelatory forms of divine power that by definition render null, or perhaps superfluous, any form of reasoned or reasonable enquiry. And it is for these reasons that Lucius's restoration to human form, his apparent 'manumission,' is on reflection illusory and misleading. The re-forming is not liberating at all once the realization sets in that the initiate has become, and will forever remain, a slave of the Egyptian gods, an utter cipher devoid of personal identity and individual capability, unable to create identity and capability except through dependence on an all-powerful slave-owner, and only to the extent that the slave-owner allows.[9]

It is particularly in the loss of critical initiative, I suggest, that a sinister significance to Lucius's story lies. The original cause of Lucius's misfortunes had been his *curiositas*, a curiosity for knowledge which led him to matters best as it turned out left unknown because the pursuit of magic and sex proved dangerous and destructive. But while in the *Metamorphoses curiositas* can be variously stigmatized (*Met.* cf. 11.15, 11.23), the term is not in and of itself negative in association, but as in general Latin usage has a purely neutral meaning. (The younger Pliny thought of it as natural to all humankind [*Ep.* 5.8.4].) *Curiositas* is in fact the precondition of the literary and philosophical learning, *doctrina*, that marks Lucius as a man of refinement and nobility so noticeably to those who encounter him (3.15, 11.15, 11.30), and of which Apuleius himself, like the emperor Hadrian an *omnium curiositatum explorator* (Tert. *Apol.* 5.7), was a prime second-century exemplar. What mattered was the purpose to which *curiositas* was put. In Lucius's new condition, however, there is no need for curiosity, for human enquiry of any kind, at all. Protective gods offer all that needs to be known and their gifts

are given in return for lifelong slavish allegiance; the elect are members of a secret society hostile to enquiry (cf. 11.22). Entry into the mysteries of Isis and Osiris can only be understood consequently as a type of escapist flight from reason, a form of turning away from reality and seeking psychological refuge in an other-worldly domain beyond the comprehension of all except those the gods themselves choose to enlighten. Revelation renders reason redundant (cf. 11.23), and it is this, I think, that makes problematic the 'happiness' with which Lucius's story ends.[10]

Before this point is taken further, I want to acknowledge an issue of crucial importance, namely, that I have so far taken book 11, at least implicitly, to express in fictional form a type of religious experience which Apuleius's Roman readers could recognize as credibly authentic and from which certain inferences might accordingly be drawn about religious life in the Roman world of the high imperial age, particularly about Lucius's 'conversion' as it is usually called. This has often been the case, notably in an earlier generation on the part of A.-J. Festugière, who saw Lucius's story as incontestable autobiographical evidence of Apuleius's own spiritual experience and who assimilated Lucius's devotion to Isis to experiences of devotion to the Christian mystery god. As Festugière put it: 'This faith of his is absolute.' A comparison could be drawn perhaps with the religious experiences of the sophist Aelius Aristides as recorded in the *Sacred Tales*. On the other hand, the story of Lucius's conversion has been taken by some to be either indeterminate or parodic and to provide no evidence at all of genuine religious experience in antiquity. I know of no way of proving the superiority of one view over the other and basically regard the issue as insoluble because so much depends on subjective responses to the text. But three of the reasons advanced for the indeterminate or parodic interpretation are worth questioning.[11]

First, there is the apparent oddity of the name of the high priest Mithras, which seems to strike an incongruous note in a story about Isis, as if a man of this name cannot belong to the cult of Isis. A dedication, however, to the Egyptian god Serapis made by the imperial freedman Aurelius Mithres known from an inscription found in Rome (*CIL* VI 571) provides an unimpeachable example of how a worshipper of the Egyptian gods might carry the name of a god of a different cult without any apparent discomfort, and authenticates by its mere existence the plausibility of Apuleius's Mithras as a worshipper of Isis. Nor is it a unique specimen: a Mithra is known in the era of Caracalla who made a dedication in Rome to Zeus Helios, Great Sarapis and Saviour (*AE* 1913.188). To assume, therefore, that the name of one mystery god cannot be found in the cult of another could well be to take an anachronistically exclusivist view of what the ancient mysteries should be, not of what they actually were, and to minimize their openness to one

another and the polytheistic context in which they had their being, from one end of the Mediterranean to the other. Initiation into one cult did not mean that entry into others could not or did not happen: Lucius, as Photis knew (3.15), had been initiated into a number of mystery cults, and so when he was in Greece was Apuleius himself, as he records in the *Apology* (55.8). In a later generation the emperor Commodus was a follower of Isis who saw himself as the very incarnation of Mithras.[12]

Second, the frequent references in the final book to the initiation fees Lucius has to pay for entry into the mysteries of Isis and Osiris can be taken as signs that Lucius is a gullible figure who is continually being duped by those responsible for his religious progress, so that his story cannot be taken seriously as evidence of ancient religiosity. Well, perhaps, but perhaps not. To do so could well depend on a modernizing and again anachronistic assumption that money and religious practice were somehow distastefully incompatible in Roman antiquity. On the contrary, the payment of fees by members of *collegia*, private societies whose main purpose was to provide burial amenities for their members but which functioned simultaneously as cultic associations, illustrates the ease of association between money and religious practice in Roman antiquity. The regulations of a *collegium* of worshippers of Diana and the new god Antinous, preserved in a second-century inscription from Lanuvium, specify that members were to pay an entry fee of 100 sesterces (and an amphora of good wine) and to make subsequent monthly contributions of 5 asses (HS1.25), sums that were to be used to provide funds for burial but also for the costs of dining when members celebrated the birthdays of Diana and Antinous and of prominent local individuals. In this case, burial provisions, group dining, and religious worship all went hand in hand, and the financing of activities was openly acknowledged and regulated. The association's activities are not strictly analogous to initiations into mystery cults, but its rules are enough to make acceptably credible the initiation fees that Apuleius expects his readers to recognize. Christian practice, as Tertullian explained (*Apol*. 39.5–6), was comparable but of course better: individuals made voluntary contributions to the Christian chest every month, as much as they could afford, not for communal feasting or drinking, but to feed and bury the poor, to support needy orphans, aged servants and victims of shipwreck, and co-religionists who found themselves condemned to the mines, exiled to an island, or held in prison. If the descriptions in Book 11 of the conventions of fasting and sexual continence, as indications of genuine prerequisites of ancient practices of initiation, are unobjectionable, as they seem to be, there should be no reason to single out the payment of fees as somehow different, as undermining any inference that the story is grounded on an essentially realistic foundation of religious life.[13]

Third, Lucius's three initiations, first into the cult of Isis at Cenchreae, and twice into the cult of Osiris at Rome, can reasonably be taken as evidence that Book 11 contains a series of false endings, the effect of which is to subvert and make comic any claims that might be made for taking the events recounted seriously: to some readers, describing a second initiation after the first and a third after the second disturbs the sense of climactic finality the first and second descriptions respectively convey. (Critics do not all agree, however: on one view the three initiations are explicable as an authorial preference for triadic narrative conventions.) In my estimation, the lurching character of Book 11 that the so-called false endings typify is no different in actuality from the lurching character of the *Metamorphoses* as a whole – not to mention the internal inconsistencies in Apuleius's storytelling to which B.E. Perry, a great admirer of Apuleius, pointed long before the surge of modern critical interest in him – and it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that judgments about them are little more than statements of personal taste on the part of readers disinclined to accept Apuleius's narrative at face value. It is hardly as if literary form can be a safe guide. Indeed, it cannot be certain that Book 11 as it is is complete. And what an ancient reader thought or expected at the end of the story is of course beyond recovery. There is, in fact, no reason why the three initiations should not follow logically first from the distinction between the cult of Isis and that of Osiris (cf. 11.27), and second from the change in Lucius's geographical location from Cenchreae to Rome (cf. 11.29). Religious conventions, that is, may have required initiation to take place locally no matter what the worshipper's previous background. Mithraic devotees proceeded through a sequence of seven grades of mystery immersion, each of which had its own initiation ritual, which illustrates the principle of how a particular cult might require more than one initiatory protocol. As A.D. Nock notably commented: 'It is possible that these additional ceremonies were genuine and due to a tendency elsewhere observed to multiply rites.' Verification seems guaranteed by the correspondence between the divine commands in Apuleius's narrative and the many dedications to gods Nock collected, from all across the Mediterranean, that were made in response to instructions received from the gods, often in dreams. Isis and Serapis are well represented among them.[14]

III

From a historical perspective, the conclusion of Lucius's story might be understood as an expression of an age that E.R. Dodds famously termed an 'age of anxiety.' The period from Marcus Aurelius to Constantine was in Dodds's view an age which saw material insecurity matched by a change throughout

the Mediterranean world in the disposition of mentality, as mass guilt and neurosis pervaded society, and people, turning in on themselves, resorted to any number of irrational means of seeking knowledge of the divine in order to assuage their manifold distresses: oracles, astrology, prophecy, ecstatic cults, and mysticism. Debate at a high level among philosophers and other intellectuals did not disappear; but the disease of irrationalism was virulent, and for many individuals escape into a world of myth and fantasy was the remedy of choice, as demand for all forms of knowledge of the supernatural increased on a dramatic scale.[15]

The claims Dodds made had universal application. For that reason alone they are breathtaking. And because there is no objective way of which I know to measure the feelings and modes of thought of the millions of people across the Mediterranean the claims embrace (most of whom, I imagine, were preoccupied most of the time with gaining a livelihood, as represented for example by the occupations that can be seen in the *Metamorphoses*), or even to assess how one age in antiquity might have experienced 'anxiety' more than another, it is incapable of proof. (I wonder, in any case, whether every age is not an age of anxiety.) As often in ancient history, the absence of comprehensive evidence, and of comparable amounts and types of evidence, prevents measurement of historical change. The result, however, is that Dodds's view is equally incapable of disproof.

Can then Book 11 of the *Metamorphoses* be viewed as evidence from the second century of a problematic irrationalism? How might such a proposition be authenticated? To answer these questions I draw next, and briefly, on two texts Dodds did not consider in any detail in which responses from broadly contemporary writers reflecting on mystery cults can be seen. The responses are divergent, but taken together go some way towards providing a basis of support for the view of Book 11 I have suggested.

First, the treatise *The True Doctrine* of the Greek philosopher and anti-Christian polemicist Celsus, which is known only from Origen's assault upon its author in the early third century, the *Contra Celsum* of about 235. *The True Doctrine* was written about 180, perhaps twenty years or so after Apuleius wrote the *Metamorphoses*, and it is self-evidently a hostile challenge to the rise of a new mystery cult which Celsus brands as banal and vapid. At a minimum it demonstrates a keen sensitivity to the dangers of one particular form of mystery experience.[16]

The principal claim Celsus makes is that Christianity is a cult of complete intellectual irresponsibility. Well informed about Christian ideas and conventions, Celsus makes the point repeatedly. He observes for instance that the Christians' turning of a mortal into a god was not inherently unusual, but that the attention given to the new divinity was far beyond reason.

Whereas the honour paid to Jesus was no different from the honour paid to the new god Antinous, the deified favourite of Hadrian (and cult object at Lanuvium), Christians were intolerant of any comparison between Jesus and, say, Apollo or Zeus because of their susceptibility to blind faith and its prejudicial effects, which was the sole explanation of the hold Jesus had on their imagination (3.36, 3.37, 3.38, 3.39). Further, the manner in which Christians vaunted their anti-intellectualism was positively distressing: 'Their injunctions are like this: "Let no one educated, no one wise, no one sensible draw near." For these abilities are thought by us to be evils. But as for anyone ignorant, anyone stupid, anyone uneducated, anyone who is a child, let him come boldly' (3.44). At a practical level the teaching meant that in times of sickness, faith was enough to produce a cure and that knowledgeable doctors were to be avoided. General Christian policy, moreover, was to avoid learning because learning was inherently bad (3.75), and the threat of eternal punishment was presumably a powerful sanction against acquiring *doctrina* (or *paideia* in its Greek form), the sophisticated knowledge to which Christians, Celsus insists, were utterly inimical: they 'flee headlong from cultured people because they are not prepared to be deceived,' and instead 'trap illiterate folk' (6.14). Christianity was founded on fear and hope, not enlightenment, on an unacceptable doctrine of eternal rewards and punishment (3.16). Some Christians, as some Jews, could not fail to see the literal absurdity of their myths and stories and accordingly allegorized them (4.38). But for a man steeped in the Greek philosophical and especially Platonist tradition for whom God was Reason (5.14), this only confirmed the cult's baselessness. The Christian religion, Celsus argued, was even worse than traditional Egyptian religion, because there the animals worshipped, cats and monkeys, dogs, crocodiles and goats, were symbols of 'invisible ideas' and were not objects of worship in themselves. Christians, however, were fixated only on the crucified Jesus, on nothing, that is, of intellectual substance (3.18–19). It was this absence of reason in Christian cult which irritated Celsus most of all: 'Some do not even want to give or to receive a reason for what they believe, and use such expressions as "Do not ask questions; just believe," and "Thy faith will save thee"' (1.9). The absurdity of commitment based on thoughtless belief alone, a charge many other critics were to make in later ages (the emperor Julian, for instance), was completely unacceptable to him.

This sketch hardly does justice to the richness of Celsus's views. But his denunciation of blind faith is unmistakable, and his attack shows the vulnerability to reasoned criticism of one form of mystery religion in the age of Apuleius, suggesting an alarm in some quarters prompted by a perception of an increase in the number of its adherents. The absolute numbers of

Christians in the later second century are of course unknown, but cannot have been great: a few thousands probably, divided, as Celsus well knew (3.10, 3.12), into various self-warring sects. Yet the beliefs they held were attracting more and more attention, and were rapidly producing new converts. The cult of Isis, which, on the view I have given of the story of Lucius, demanded of its members a comparable sort of intellectual submissiveness, was already much more firmly established in the Roman world.[17]

A very different attitude is perceptible, second, in Plutarch's treatise *On Isis and Osiris*, a complex work that today remains a crucial source of knowledge about the mythology and worship of Isis and Osiris in the early second century. It was composed about 115, near the end of Plutarch's life, a decade or so before Apuleius was born. Its significance for present purposes lies in the way it recognizes the subordination to Isis required of her followers, but responds to cult practices and beliefs cerebrally, explicating traditional stories about the gods, of which there were many and sometimes conflicting versions – a parallel can be drawn with the newer Christian stories – and reconciling them to other mythological traditions, and, most importantly, to Greek philosophical speculations about the forces of nature, creation, and the processes of life. 'That Osiris is the same as Dionysus, who ought to know better than you, Clea …?' Plutarch asks of his interlocutor (35), and on the generative powers of the Egyptian gods he writes: 'But this is similar to the theological doctrines of the Stoics' (40), and again: 'Thus Isis is the female principle in nature and that which receives all procreation, and so she is called by Plato the Nurse and the All-receiving, while most people call her the Myriad-named because she is transformed by reason (*logos*) and receives corporeal and spiritual forms' (53). There is no objection here to the submissiveness Isis requires, which includes the physical rigours of fasting from food and sex, but it is not, as Plutarch presents it, a submissiveness that is unthinking: humans are naturally pious and imbued with faith (23, *pistis*), and the true Isiac uses reason and philosophy to study the truth the mysteries contain. It is mere superstition to interpret the stories concerned about her otherwise (3, 67, 11, 20). Moreover, the Egyptian cults involve no irrational rites (8), and subservience to Isis is a way of gaining knowledge of the supreme God (2: *gnosis*). An originally foreign cult consequently can be integrated into the mainstream of Greek religiosity as understood and appreciated by the man, like Plutarch himself, of *paideia*.[18]

This highly intellectualized analysis of the Egyptian cults reveals a radically different type of system of belief from that attributed by Celsus to contemporary Christians. It is one in which mythology becomes theology, a process that despite the strictures of Celsus was to take place of course within Christianity itself under the influence of a multitude of commentators,

notably in the present context Origen. In its intensity and sophistication, however, Plutarch's analysis also presupposes a widespread popular engagement with mystery cults whose inherent demand of subjecting the self to the divine normally excluded the theological and so created a special opportunity for abstract philosophical rationalization of cult beliefs and practices that was, in and of itself, exceptional. In its own way, therefore, Plutarch's treatise is as forceful a statement about the prevalence, if not problems, of the irrational as Celsus's polemical treatise against the Christians.

Plutarch had a special significance for Apuleius, in that his Lucius claimed on his mother's side descent from the philosopher, as also from Plutarch's relative Sextus (*Met.* 1.2: *nepos*); that is, Sextus of Chaeronea, the teacher of Marcus Aurelius. The connection was evidently made to establish an intellectual pedigree, as it was in real life in the case of the Severan sophist Nicagoras of Athens, who on a Greek inscription is similarly identified as a descendant of the same two men. Lucius, as seen earlier, was a man of literary and philosophical learning, and his reputation as such was still observable in Rome towards the end of his adventures (11.30). At this late point, however, his Christian-like zeal for faith has come to supersede the erstwhile pre-eminence of *doctrina*, for despite the early association with Greek philosophers, once Lucius is re-formed he can speak of his religious experience only in ecstatic and dissociative terms, not in terms of theology. The contrast between the rational-philosophical and the irrational-superstitious is strong and telling. Among Christians, Tertullian was to ask with a fanaticism long understood what reason there was after Jesus for intellectual enquiry, for *curiositas*, when Stoicism, Platonism, and even dialectical forms of Christianity were irrelevant: 'If we only believe, we have no further need' (*De praes. her.* 7). *Mutatis mutandis*, Lucius could have asked a similar question after his transformation from active pursuer of knowledge, however misguided, to passive recipient of revelation. What need was there for curiosity after Isis? The point reached at the end of the *Metamorphoses* is essentially that voiced by Tertullian.[19]

IV

The problematical view of Book 11 I have suggested can be appreciated from another point of view if the extent is considered of Isiac commitment in the city of Rome in the second century as Apuleius will have understood it. The subject is complex and no more than an impression is here attempted. An advantage nonetheless lies in concentrating on a restricted region. The key is to think imaginatively about Apuleius's personal knowledge of and experiences in the city, independently of the story he tells about Lucius.[20]

Precisely when Apuleius wrote the *Metamorphoses* is unknown. A common assumption, good enough for present purposes, is that it belongs roughly to the 160s, at the beginning of the anxious age. It is as the narrator reports 'a Greekish story' (*Met.* 1.1: *fabulam Graecanicam*), but the work at large has an inarguably Roman bias and is full of Roman idioms and allusions, not only references to laws on marriage and adultery (6.22, 8.24, 9.27), or technical words that anyone trained anywhere in Roman *doctrina* might know (e.g., *peculium*, *pomerium*, *postliminium*), but also words and phrases that indicate a direct and personal familiarity with the city, its populous character and exceptional size, its topography and institutions. The bias is unsurprising given that Apuleius was first and foremost a product of the Latinate West, no matter what the origin of Lucius' story or the influence upon him of Greek sophistic culture. He is known to have visited Rome, probably in the mid 150s, after his years of study in Athens and before his trial in Oea. It seems indisputable that what he observed and learned affected the composition of the *Metamorphoses*. The argument, admittedly, could be made that the Roman allusions, especially the topographical allusions, do not prove first-hand knowledge of the city, and reflect no greater knowledge than any well-informed provincial might command. Yet against this there is Apuleius's own testimony of having visited Rome.[21]

A catalogue of everyday events listed in a passage of the philosophical work *De mundo* (35) can be taken to confirm his knowledge of the city. One man appears at the Porticus Minucia to receive his allotment of free grain (the topographical detail is notable), others appear in court to prosecute or defend cases; a man sentenced to death is led to his place of execution, while another revels in nocturnal drinking parties; there are public dinners, *lectisternia*, holidays and games, sacrifices and honours for the gods of the household, the pouring of libations to the dead – all to illustrate Apuleius's view that established law is the impulse of every social action. The result is a city that teems with contrasting sensations: the fragrance of exotic perfume poisoned by the malodour of excrement; resounding hymns and songs mingling with vulgar chants and the sobbing wails of those lamenting the dead. Rome was a city in my view that Apuleius knew intimately, and he may well have written the *Metamorphoses* while he was there or shortly afterwards when his memories of it were still fresh.[22]

As a keen social observer Apuleius can scarcely have failed to notice how prominent a part the cult of Isis played in Rome's religious life. There were temples and shrines to the goddess everywhere, on the Caelian, the Esquiline, the Aventine, the Capitol. On the Tiber embankment there was a temple specifically to Isis Pelagia, the goddess of the sailing season. Altars and dedications portraying her image and the symbols of her cult, and statues looking

much like the Isis who appeared to Lucius at Cenchreae (*Met.* 11.3–4), were ubiquitous. Under Hadrian and his successor Antoninus Pius, the rulers of Apuleius's world, Isis even appeared on the coinage. The most celebrated site of her cult was a temple in the Campus Martius, part of a seclusive complex between the Saepta Julia and the temple of Minerva Chalcidica that included a temple of Serapis. It was this temple to which Lucius hurried when he arrived in Rome from Corinth (11.26), preceded in real life surely by Apuleius himself. Two hundred years earlier, Julius Caesar had placed a statue of the 'new Isis' Cleopatra next to a statue of Venus in the Temple of Venus Genetrix as he inaugurated his forum, a highly controversial action. (The statue was seen by Cassius Dio [51.22–3] much later.) Subsequently Tiberius had a temple of Isis burned, her statue thrown into the Tiber, and her priests crucified after discovering their role in an adulterous scandal. Already in the Julio-Claudian age, however, festivals of Isis, Serapis, and Osiris were inscribed in the calendars of Italian farmers (the *menologia rustica*) alongside the traditional Roman festivals of Saturnalia and Parentalia, and Isis's providence had long then been acknowledged in various cities such as Palestrina. In the Rome of Apuleius's day, the early hostility to the goddess was a thing of the past, and as Minucius Felix was soon to remark (*Octavius* 23.1), the rites of Egypt were now Roman rites, and rites everywhere evident: it was not controversial for a sistrum used in Rome to display images on its curved top of Romulus and Remus and the she-wolf that suckled them.[23]

Isis and her Egyptian companions appealed to all levels of society, as the rich inscriptional evidence of her worship in the city reveals. Caracalla was a devotee in his day, while a certain Scipio Orfitus, a descendant of a senatorial friend of Apuleius, worshipped her consort Serapis. At a lower remove, the less distinguished soldier L. Ceius Privatus can be found as a cultist, and the freedman P. Sextilius Papia and the freedwoman Herennia Laudica. There is a certain Usia Prima, whose mother had been a slave, and Alexandria, a slave herself, or the quite ordinary Delphicus and Pontulena Prepusa, who invoked the protection of Isis for the tomb of their son, C. Pontulenus Coenus. Such individuals were not all contemporaries of Apuleius – the enthusiast Crescens who dedicated a marble altar to Isis was a freedman of the emperor Titus – but they indicate how socially diverse in the middle of the second century the body of Isiac worshippers at Rome is likely to have been: 'men and women of every rank and age,' to use Apuleius's own description of the initiates at Cenchreae: *uiri feminaeque omnis dignitationis et omnis aetatis* (*Met.* 11.10).[24]

Rome's embrace of Isis was part and parcel of the passion for all things Egyptian, Egyptomania as it is sometimes called, that had come to permeate

the culture of the towns and cities of Italy in the wake of Cleopatra's presence in Rome during the ascendancy of Caesar and the annexation soon afterwards by Octavian of her exotic kingdom. From a socio-cultural point of view, Apuleius's choice of Isis as a salvific figure to bring resolution to Lucius's story at Rome cannot therefore be a surprise, no matter how striking the change in tone of Book 11 when compared with the tone of the previous books. Her cult was as clear and sparkling a thread in the texture of religious life in the capital as it was in Carthage and Athens, the cities in which Apuleius had lived before he arrived in Rome; in Sabratha where he was soon to stand trial and where the restored remains of Isis's temple on the seashore's edge can still be seen; and in the Roman colony of Corinth, *Colonia Laus Julia Corinthiensis* (cf. *Met.* 10.35), which Apuleius purposefully made the home of his hero. Lucius's story is a story of a quest for knowledge, explicable as an adaptation to a new literary form of a motif from the epic tradition; but it was not a matter of literary imitation alone or of literary imitation divorced from the wider world of contemporary reality: it was as well a response to Apuleius's awareness of the ever-increasing appeal and attractiveness of a religion that satisfied the individual's search for certain knowledge, and of a journey along the road to salvation that took away all need for independent thought.[25]

What accounts for the appeal and the attraction? The institutional background against which the *Metamorphoses* was written is, I suggest, a subject of some relevance. In comparison with the early imperial period, with all its upheavals and convulsions as Rome adjusted to the realities of hereditary monarchy, the age of the Antonines has at least since the time of Edward Gibbon conventionally been regarded as a period of great stability and success, and in some ways perhaps it was. There is no Tacitus at least to maintain in the later second century the indictment of Augustan autocracy as it had developed over the course of the first century and beyond. Yet the power exercised by Hadrian and Antoninus Pius was no less absolute than the power of earlier emperors, as contemporaries (and Gibbon) well understood; and it is only to be expected that Apuleius was as alert as any other subject of empire to the many ways in which imperial power manifested itself. Two uncontroversial examples are enough to make the point when imagining Apuleius's experiences in Rome.[26]

First, Apuleius was sensitive to the symbolic importance to a community of its public buildings. Byrrhena's words to Lucius praising the temples, baths, and other buildings of Hypata (*Met.* 2.19) make this clear. He cannot have failed, therefore, when visiting the temple of Isis Campensis in Rome in the 150s to be struck by the authority represented by a cluster of imperially sponsored buildings close at hand in the northern and central

Campus Martius which were all the work of Hadrian, one of Rome's greatest monumental builders. The cluster comprised the renovated Pantheon with its enormous dome – completed if not begun by Hadrian – the temple and basilica of the deified Matidia, Trajan's niece, the basilica of Marciana, his sister, and immediately at hand the monumental gate that connected the Iseum to the Saepta. There was also a temple to the deified Hadrian himself in the middle of the Campus Martius that Antoninus Pius commissioned. Further, as he looked across the river Apuleius might have focused his gaze on the mighty mass of Hadrian's Mausoleum, a dominating architectural sight, and as he crossed the city to the Forum he could scarcely have missed the overwhelming sight of Hadrian's Temple of Venus and Rome, the largest temple ever built in the city, which Hadrian was said to have designed himself. Newly completed in Apuleius's day, this symbol of world empire, a complex wholly Greek in design and appearance, will have recalled the Olympieion and other Hadrianic structures in Athens Apuleius had recently seen during his period of study there. Notable also among a multiplicity of imperial buildings was the complex of Trajan's Forum, which included a temple to the deified Trajan that again Hadrian had added. More than two hundred years later, when the emperor Constantius arrived in the city from the east on 28 April 357, the impact of the Forum was still overpowering, one of many sights, including the Pantheon, that as Ammianus Marcellinus records (16.10.13–16), astonished the first-time visitor. The cumulative effect was unmistakable: the physical resources at the emperor's disposal as exhibited in monumental architecture were limitless.[27]

Second, Apuleius was also sensitive to religious phenomena of all kinds, as is evident from any number of episodes in the *Metamorphoses*. The interest pervades his other works, too, as for instance the *De deo Socratis*, which expresses in many ways the richness of the contemporary varieties of Roman religious experience in the second century. Apuleius can hardly have been unaware consequently of the recent admission to the Roman pantheon of the distinctive new god Antinous, who as seen earlier was much in Celsus's mind when inveighing against the Christians. Accompanying Hadrian to Egypt in 130 – 'Crowned with heavy lotus-blossoms you had sat on the prow of Adrian's barge, gazing across the green turbid Nile' – the charismatic favourite had been mysteriously sacrificed to the river in October of that year. On the emperor's initiative, however, he had soon afterwards become a god, the normal process of consecration by vote of the senate being judged irrelevant, and lived on in the epoch of Apuleius's maturity in all his glorious beauty as an immortal, hymned as Adonis and worshipped as Silvanus and Pan, Bacchus and Dionysus, Hermes and Apollo and, most tellingly of all, as Osiris the god of the dead in the new city of Antinoopolis

that Hadrian founded in his memory. There, like another new god, Jesus, he became an object of magical imprecation to help a man secure a woman's love and body. Together with much else from Egypt, Hadrian had installed this god in Rome, and had included a temple to him in the extravagant villa he built outside the city at Tivoli. But Antinous was portrayed in statues and other media all across the empire, even on such mundane objects as glass flasks. Already in North Africa, Apuleius can scarcely have missed such images. The effect again was not to be missed, as Christians recognized in their complaints that a man thought to have been a slave should become a god and that the emperor intimidated people into worshipping him: imperial power could extend well beyond the mortal sphere, allowing the ruler to control the composition of the pantheon much as he controlled the composition of the senate. 'The emperor was what the emperor did.'[28]

Society had long acquiesced in the imposition of monarchy. Who was there in Apuleius's day who knew any other form of government? Antoninus Pius, emperor for more than a decade when Apuleius arrived in Rome, came to be remembered for his gentle and beneficent rule, seeing no need to visit the provinces as Hadrian had done, but governing from the capital and leaving the city only to visit his country estates. His relations with the senate were harmonious, and political crises of the sort that had provoked animosities at the beginning and end of Hadrian's rule were replaced by an atmosphere of concord and tranquillity. Hence a favourable press: in the spring of 143, Aelius Aristides descanted in a speech on the many virtues of Roman imperial rule under Pius (*On Rome*); Pausanias later catalogued the features of his secure and peaceful regime (8.43.3–6); and Marcus Aurelius extolled him as no other: a man of 'complete order, strength, consistency' (*Med*. 1.16; cf. 6.30).[29]

Despite his reputation for humanity, however, the power Pius commanded was as absolute as that of his predecessors and constantly revealed itself in dictatorial ways. The senate, reluctant at Hadrian's death to deify an emperor who had murdered (it was said) a number of its members, acceded to his demand for immediate action not only because of Pius's histrionic threat to refuse the throne otherwise, but also because he could cow the body into submission with the threat of military force (Cass. Dio 70.1.3). There was no difficulty later in securing the deification of Pius's wife Faustina. His administrative and judicial rulings, moreover, to claimants from all across the empire, were definitive; he gave liberal grants of money to petitioners and provided relief to cities damaged by earthquake in Lycia, Caria, Cos, and Rhodes; he erected monumental buildings in Rome and Italy, Greece, Ionia, Carthage, and Syria; and he made war when provoked by Britons and Moors, and maintained frontier security as occasion demanded in North Africa,

Upper Germany, and Raetia. As a system of government, the imperial autocracy permitted no formal expression of the popular will and allowed no exercise of popular sovereignty. To the extent that there was a Roman 'state' it was the emperor in his own person. Public expectations of how he should ideally comport himself might have constrained performance, but the power the emperor exercised was always absolute and personal, and always unpredictable. Tellingly enough, Pius permitted himself to be addressed by the title *dominus et deus*, and in a rescript to a certain Eudaemon of Nicomedia, supremely confident in his authority, it appears, described himself as 'master of the world' (*Dig*. 14.2.9, *tou kosmou kyrios*). No one can have been under any illusion to the contrary about a man who associated himself with images of cosmic rule and solar symbolism. His celebration of the nine hundredth anniversary of Rome's foundation on 21 April 148 can only have added to his authority.[30]

Apuleius was to acknowledge the *pax Romana* under Pius in a passage of the philosophical work *De mundo* (31). The true realities of imperial rule, however, emerge clearly enough from a section of his *De deo Socratis* (128–9), where Apuleius claims that gods and mortals live in completely separate spheres and have no direct contact with one another. He is preparing here to introduce his Platonist conception of *daemones*, entities intermediate between gods and men that are the only means of communication between the two, and he continues that human perception of the gods is scarcely possible, explaining that this should cause no surprise by drawing an analogy from the human world of politics: *quod quidem mirari super diis immortalibus nequaquam congruerit, cum alioquin et inter homines, qui fortunae munere opulenti elatus et usque ad regni nutabilem suggestum et pendulum tribunal euectus est, raro aditu sit, longe remotis arbitris in quibusdam dignitatis suae penetralibus degens. Parit enim conuersatio contemptum, raritas conciliat admirationem* ('To wonder at this in the case of the eternal gods would be wholly inappropriate, since, even amongst men, he who has been raised up by the rich gift of fortune and carried as far as the tottering throne and precarious platform of kingship is similarly rare of access, living far removed from onlookers in the inner sanctum (as it were) of his high degree. For familiarity breeds contempt, while infrequency of access secures awe'). The image invoked is that of a monarch, remote, secluded, difficult of access. It has something in common with a passage in the *De mundo* (26), in which Apuleius speaks of the great power of the Persian king, of his seclusion within his palace, and the protection afforded him by his bodyguards. It relies, however, on Roman idioms that are apparent not least in the terms *suggestus* and *tribunal*, which to a contemporary audience must naturally have evoked images of the emperor, who when dispensing

justice from a lofty platform, as he did, or sparing the lives of those defeated in battle, as he could, could be as far withdrawn from his subjects as any earlier monarch. Some will have remembered that Domitian was said to have stabbed flies in the seclusion of his residence, protected by imperial guards (Suet. *Dom*. 3.1).[31]

As in earlier eras, the majority of Rome's subjects in the Antonine age never saw a living emperor. Hadrian during his reign had undertaken great tours of the provinces that might have permitted him to be seen in the flesh more than his predecessors, but – it cannot have been otherwise – by only a fraction of the fifty millions or so of people who inhabited Rome's empire. To most, the emperor was known through portraiture, in part the portraiture of the coinage, but more dramatically the ubiquitous portraiture of statuary, which was the principal means by which one individual ruler could be identified and distinguished from another. Portraits were of course manipulable, and from the inception of the imperial system they had assumed idealizing features that helped elevate the emperor above his subjects. Suetonius's biographical interest in painting realistic verbal pictures of Roman emperors, blemishes and all, was a reaction to this tendency. By the time of Hadrian and Pius, three types of imperial representation had long entrenched themselves: the emperor as chief citizen, clad in a toga, the garment of peace, often with his head covered to signify the act of offering sacrifice in his role as *pontifex maximus*; the emperor as a figure heroically assimilated to the gods, his body partially or fully nude and with symbols of divinity suitably added; and the emperor as *imperator*, the supreme commander of Rome's legions, mightily portrayed in battle dress (cuirass and military cloak) and shown above all as a victor in warfare. When Apuleius drew attention at his trial to the statues of Pius in the basilica at Sabratha, these are the images his listeners will have seen (*Apol*. 85).[32]

The numbers of portrait types now visible for any individual emperor depend self-evidently on the chance results of archaeological discovery. It is striking, however, that the image of the emperor as *imperator* is very much in evidence under Hadrian and Antoninus Pius, rulers who traditionally are considered pacific figures relatively uninvolved in military campaigns. Hadrian was compelled to fight a war against the Jews of Judaea in the late stages of his reign, and, as noted earlier, Pius was presented with a number of military challenges that are only sketchily understood. Military actions may indeed have been greater under both rulers than the traditional record suggests, especially in Britain. To display the emperor as military victor, however, was not necessarily to commemorate specific military victories; it was also to promote the notion that a peaceable emperor was always at the ready to protect his subjects from external dangers through the control he

exercised over the legions. Yet the effect of the apparent proliferation of military images under Pius, in some respects technically akin to those of Hadrian, was surely to remind viewers that the imperial system was at root a military monarchy, and that no one could rival the military resources at the emperor's disposal. Elite male Romans might wish to be commemorated after death in sculptures that portrayed them as civic magistrates dispensing justice, dutiful husbands in concordant marriages, and heroic victors in battle. But no one could match or rival the military power that the emperor commanded. As much under the often sternly portrayed Pius as anyone else, the system of rule was a despotic institution based ultimately on force, no matter what the veils of constitutionality in which it was cloaked or the niceties of deportment played out between emperor and those on whom he relied for day-to-day governance. As the sophist Favorinus is notoriously said to have remarked, even on a trivial point of literary taste it was impossible to argue with the master of thirty legions. The statues of Hadrian and Antoninus Pius as *imperator* bore a triumphalist meaning that no one could possibly misunderstand.[33]

V

Book 11 of the *Metamorphoses* is the product of an extraordinarily fertile imagination. It is variously funny, unsettling, threatening, and ultimately enigmatic. Its central character is last seen as a happy initiate into the Egyptian mysteries, but an initiate whose discovery of happiness has required, whether he realizes it or not, the forfeiture of the critical thirst for knowledge that had characterized his earlier life, and, whether he realizes it or not, the replacement of intellectual curiosity by a degrading servile abasement to the gods Isis and Osiris. The story implies that any initiate paid a similar price: a loss of intellectual independence for the gain of the satisfactions of blind faith. There are indications in other works of literature that the age of Apuleius was an age in which the Egyptian mysteries and comparable mystery cults attracted more devotees than ever before. Lucius stands therefore as a fictional representative of a historical development, and the presumption must be strong that the shift from active to passive so evident in his story was an experience widely shared in Roman imperial society of the Antonine age, no matter how difficult it may be to measure its extent. Whether Apuleius himself was initiated into the mysteries of Isis there is no way of telling. I suspect that he was. The ever-compelling description he gives of Lucius's ecstatic encounter with the divine tempts the reader to assume authentic authorial knowledge, but this may be a mistake if the story offers nothing that the uninitiated could not know. If Apuleius was an Isiac

initiate, he stands of course as a figure for whom initiation did not automatically mean the loss of intellectual enterprise: he was remembered after all as a *philosophus Platonicus*, and a philosopher taken seriously, centuries later, by as eminent and brilliant an intellectual as Augustine (even if an intellectual affected by the convictions of belief). The supersession of reason by faith was not inevitable or universal. Nonetheless, if no more than obliquely, Lucius's story surely offers some commentary on the socio-religious character of Antonine society once set against the backdrop of Apuleius's probable experiences and observations in the city of Rome.[34]

Whether this was Apuleius's intent is irrelevant. The *Metamorphoses* has been read in many different ways and self-evidently it can have no single meaning. How indeed could the author's intentions be known? And to keep matters in perspective, it should never be forgotten, as the critic Erich Auerbach once insisted, that the story of Lucius contains much that is fundamentally frivolous. Augustine might have had some doubts (*De civ. D.* 18.18), beyond my comprehension, but men do not turn into asses. The evidence I have outlined, however, indicates how the conclusion of the story is not as straightforward as it seems to be on the surface, and how in its historical implications it has a disturbing aspect. Its ambivalence is captured in the near final image of Lucius as a devotee of Isis and Osiris, subject to visitations from the gods, but simultaneously and incongruously a man still associated with *studia* and *doctrina* (*Met.* 11.30). It is impossible to demonstrate that the servile passivity so much the mark of the re-formed Lucius, with all its inward-looking, anti-intellectual associations, was typical of all those who, awaiting the certainty of knowledge their cult promised to provide, worshipped Isis and the rest of the Egyptian gods in the Iseum Campense and elsewhere in Rome. But it seems to me plausible that Lucius's story, in which the Roman emperor appears as the key source of relief to the individual in distress (3.29), as the figure by whose genius soldiers take an oath (9.41), and as the first to claim attention when Isis's favour is sought by her provincial worshippers for Rome and its people (11.17), can be understood as the story of an urgent search for the absolute in an age of unremitting absolutism. At a minimum, the popularity of the Isis cult and the omnipotence of the emperor are two features of Roman history in the high imperial age that seem to run in tandem, and a causal connection between them might reasonably be inferred. Unquestioning submission to the dictates of a divinity was a response to the ever-deepening entrenchment in Roman society of imperial autocracy, in an age that was perhaps less secure and stable than is conventionally thought. The crisis of Marcus's reign after all was not far off. In that discovery there can be little cause for joy.[35]

12

Apuleius and Adultery in the Age of the Antonines

When writing a novel, an author naturally often makes use of his personal experiences, but a novel is not an autobiography.

W.H. Auden, *Forewords and Afterwords*

To insist on a single meaning in a work of literature is a hazardous enterprise, raising issues of authorial intent and interpretative methodology neatly encapsulated in an anecdote about Robert Browning. In answer to a question about the meaning of one of his poems, Browning replied that when the poem was written God and the poet were fully aware of the answer. At the time of asking, however, 'God knows' was all that Browning could offer.[1]

Apuleius's *Metamorphoses* is a complex work that combines a narrative of a man magically transformed into an ass with a series of largely self-standing digressions commonly referred to as the inserted tales. It can be understood in many ways. One way is to think of it as a story about love. A torrid affair between its hero Lucius and a slave girl named Photis sets the main action in motion, and Lucius's rapturous encounter with the goddess Isis brings the story to its end. There is in the work accordingly (one might say) a certain 'progress of love,' from sexual adventurism to religious devotion, in which the reader encounters along the way variations of many kinds: the perfectly romantic love of the young, noble, and beautiful couple Charite and Tlepolemus that leads to marriage and family happiness (though tragedy later supervenes); the homosexual inclinations of a decadent group of Syrian priests led by the dissolute Philebus; the marital fidelity of the self-effacing Plotina, who bravely follows her husband into exile and petitions the Roman emperor to restore him to honourable estate; sensationalistic acts of bestiality between an aristocratic Greek woman and Lucius the Ass;

and incestuous attractions, of stepmother to stepson and, it seems, of sister to brother. Further, the mythical story of Cupid and Psyche that occupies the central portion of the *Metamorphoses* is a story of an initially star-crossed love between a male god and a mortal woman that comes to a happy ending through divine intervention, anticipating the final union in the main story of Lucius and Isis. Evidently enough, the *Metamorphoses* in some sense explores a universe of love.[2]

One of the variations on display is an interest in adultery. It appears early in Book 1, in the first inserted tale, where the minor character Aristomenes tells Lucius of the fate of his erstwhile companion Socrates, whose liaison with a witch named Meroe had led to Socrates' death. It appears again in Book 2, in an inserted tale about an adulteress who murdered her husband in order to inherit his money and please her lover; and again in Book 8, in a tale about an adulterous slave steward (a *uilicus*), whose misbehaviour led to the loss of his family and the slave's grisly punishment. It is especially evident in Book 9, where four stories are told of adulterous wives. Three are interrelated and form a long digression from the main narrative; and all four, as far as can be told, are the inventions of Apuleius, for there is nothing like them in the *Onos* attributed to Lucian, the summary of a now lost work about a man magically transformed into an ass that is commonly taken to be the prototype of his work.[3]

What is the historical meaning of this interest? This is the question with which I am concerned in this essay. My object is to examine the theme of adultery in the *Metamorphoses*, first with the help of some evidence from Roman law, and second from material on the images of Roman emperors and their wives in the second-century era of Apuleius, broadly understood. I begin by resuming and briefly commenting on the principal episodes, and then move to the relevant contextual sources. I note at once that the stories overall have tragic associations. This is hardly surprising: adultery is by nature a transgressive act that undermines marriage as a lawfully established and culturally approved institution, a threat to the well-being of the parties concerned and a threat to society at large. The stories' tragic associations, however, are typical of the associations of sex in the *Metamorphoses* as a whole, for as Apuleius presents it, sex is a predominantly dangerous, and sometimes violent, force that jeopardizes and erodes all the various boundaries and bonds that normally order and regulate society. So, for example, the boundary between slave and free is threatened by Lucius's affair with Photis (the free man becomes enslaved to a slave), the boundary between human and animal is threatened by the Ass's sensationalistic encounter with a lustful noblewoman, and the boundary between mortal and immortal is threatened by Cupid's infatuation with Psyche. Again, the bond of friendship

is destroyed between Tlepolemus, Charite's husband, and Thrasyllus, her spurned suitor, as rampant desire leads to both men's deaths; and the bonds of family are comprehensively damaged when a stepmother besotted with her husband's son kills her own child in order to satisfy her awful longing. Sex can be full of momentary pleasures, as the love-making scenes between Lucius and Photis, perhaps some of the most erotically charged passages in all Latin literature, illustrate; but sex in the *Metamorphoses* is for the most part subversive, leading to personal misfortune and social chaos or both. This is particularly true in the adultery tales, where uncontrollable sexual appetites, especially those of women, repeatedly destabilize and throw into confusion marital ties. The stories are not overtly moralizing or judgmental, but they are full of implications. The initial assumption I make in assessing them is that all works of literature are historical documents, and that the adultery stories in the *Metamorphoses* must bear some relationship to the world in which they were written. My purpose in other words is to determine their contemporary significance.[4]

I

First the story of the slave *uilicus* (*Met.* 8.22), which Lucius the Ass says he heard one night on a rural estate where some *pastores* with whom he was travelling took their night-time rest. It is a horrible tale, from the outset a story about a crime (*facinus*). The slave had been a steward on the estate where the *pastores* were lodging, and was married to a slave woman from the same household. He was in love, however, with a free woman from a different household. When his wife learned this she was bitterly angry, and keenly aware of the dishonour her marriage had suffered (*tori sui contumeliam*), she first destroyed her husband's accounts and the provisions he had stored up, then killed herself and their infant child by throwing herself into a well with her little boy tied to her. The steward's owner discovered what had happened and punished the steward in a sensationally gruesome way: he had the man stripped and bound to a tree, covered in honey, and exposed to an army of ants. The adulterous slave was duly eaten alive.

The horrible character of the story is obvious. It hardly makes for an amusing interlude. Technically it is not a story about adultery at all, because according to Roman law adultery was an offence that could be committed only by women, and in any case slaves, as slaves, were formally unable to marry and were thus theoretically incapable of marital infidelity. Resolution of this situation, of a kind, occurred once the Severan jurist Ulpian stated that slaves could legally be accused of adultery. But the law had long anticipated that a free woman might have an affair with a slave, as in the story

here, which assumes that slaves commonly entered into relationships that everyone regarded as marriage and that they formed families just like free members of society. (The story can have no credibility otherwise.) The marital vocabulary Apuleius uses of the couple as husband and wife – they are *maritus* and *uxor* – is the vocabulary of free society, and the values of free society are taken to apply to them despite their legal and social inferiority. Fidelity in their union is expected, and infidelity shames the partner betrayed. A marriage between slaves, it emerges, is inherently uncontroversial, but it can be threatened by impropriety, and in this case it brings utter family destruction. Evidently enough, illicit sex, even on the part of a slave, is terrible.[5]

Now the four stories of Book 9. They are all similar in structure. The first (*Met*. 9.5–7) is introduced as a story that will be pleasing (9.4: *lepidam*), and is very different in tone therefore from the story of the wicked slave. A poor workman leaves his house one day to earn his daily bread. His lascivious wife duly admits her lover, but her husband returns unexpectedly and she is forced to hide the lover in a large storage jar. The unsuspecting husband, locked out of the house, commends his wife for keeping their home safe in his absence, as it seems, but finds himself upbraided once inside for returning early and being a poor provider. He has an explanation: he has found someone to buy the storage jar, at a good price. The quick-thinking wife retorts that she already has a customer willing to pay a better sum: the customer is even now inside the jar, inspecting it. Her lover, equally quick-witted, rises to the occasion, leaps out of the jar, and complains to the husband that the jar needs to be thoroughly cleaned before he can buy it. Delighted by his wife's good business sense and eager to complete the sale, the silly husband jumps into the jar and begins to clean it. As he does so, his wife leans over and gives directions, telling him to attend to this spot and that – while all the time the lover is making love to her, following her instructions. Once the jar is ready, the lover insists that the husband carry it to his house, and the obliging husband obliges.

This is a comic, even farcical, story in which the characters are simply drawn. The workman is a dupe, his wife a scheming sex-fiend, the lover a clever opportunist. The comedy depends on the wife's ability to fool her husband, the farce on the jumping in and out of the jar. The main episode following the husband's return to the house could easily be imagined as taking place on stage, in a theatre, a possibility enhanced by the use of direct speech in the rapid exchange of conversation that engages all three figures. A thoughtful male reader, especially perhaps a married reader, alert to the erotic charge of the story, might feel anxious about the wife's behaviour, and wonder about his own potential as a cuckold (*uarium et mutabile semper*

femina); but there is nothing here to do with dishonour, revenge, or punishment, as in the story of the steward. Humour is all.[6]

The remaining stories are more complicated, both in nature and because of their interconnections. They concern respectively a miller and his wife; a *decurio*, a local civic councillor, and his wife; and a fuller and his wife. The characters all belong to the same community, the miller and the fuller being neighbours. In all three stories it is the wife who is adulterous, the husband who is deceived. Some of the characters have names – the *decurio* is Barbarus, his wife Arete, his slave, who plays an important role in his story, Myrmex; Arete's lover, who also becomes the lover of the miller's wife, is named Philesitherus – but the miller, the fuller, and their wives are nameless.

The sequence begins when the Ass falls into the ownership of the miller and learns that the miller's wife is an habitual adulteress. He spots one of her lovers, and overhears conversations between the woman and her confidante, an old crone, that make her character clear. He is moved consequently to tell what he knows because he wants to expose the woman's wickedness (*flagitia*), particularly after he hears the woman and the crone conspire to cause the downfall of the miller, a good and honest man. There is nothing comic therefore in what he reports. From the beginning the story he tells is a sinister story. This is what happens: the old woman laments the inadequacies of the wife's current lover and recommends Philesitherus as a replacement. She knows that Philesitherus has recently been involved in an intrigue in which a husband was deceived, and she explains, the Ass tells, how the deception occurred. As soon as it has begun, that is to say, the story of the miller's wife is interrupted by a new story.

The decurion Barbarus had had to leave home on a journey. Fearful that his beautiful wife Arete might be seduced and dishonour him, he had instructed his slave Myrmex to guard her closely, which Myrmex dutifully did. Enter Philesitherus, who noticed Arete one afternoon as Myrmex was escorting her to the baths, and, immediately captivated, offered Myrmex money in order to gain access to her, promising cash for Arete as well if she would take him as her lover. Torn between the demands of loyalty to his master and the lure of gold, Myrmex succumbed to greed and informed his mistress of Philesitherus's proposition. Arete, as corruptible as Myrmex, indicated her compliance. The slave duly arranged a night-time assignation. All was proceeding as planned until Barbarus unexpectedly returned from his journey. Panic-stricken, Myrmex stalled his master while Philesitherus made his escape, and danger was apparently averted. In his retreat, however, Philesitherus left his shoes in Arete's bedroom, and next morning Barbarus noticed them and guessed the truth. At once he had Myrmex bound and

dragged off to the forum to be punished. But it happened that Philesitherus was already there and gathered what was afoot. Taking command of the situation, Philesitherus accosted Myrmex and accused him of stealing his shoes at the baths the day before. Barbarus, convinced that he had made a mistake, sent Myrmex home, forgave him, and returned the shoes to Philesitherus.

As with the story of the jar, the main theme here is the deception of a husband by an errant wife and her lover. The story has an erotic element, but it is minimal: love-making details are passed over. The deception is comic – Barbarus is indeed fooled – yet the story is not as humorous as the story of the jar, because the events that take place all flow from the notion, taken as universal, that human beings are susceptible to what Philesitherus calls *fragilitas humanae fidei* (*Met*. 9.18: the 'frailness of human loyalty'). Adultery is an outcome of human weakness, and in its assumption that everyone can be tempted and corrupted the story offers a bleak comment on human nature in general. The shoes provide amusement – amusement that depends in part on the reality that slaves were always really stealing clothes and shoes at the baths, not least as the evidence of *defixiones* reveals; but they are also a sobering reminder, on reflection, that successful deception requires careful organization.[7]

The Ass's narrative now returns to the miller's wife, whose passion has been aroused by the old woman's story of Philesitherus. Arrangements are made, and the wife and the lover rendezvous for dinner one evening in her house. Her husband is conveniently dining next door at the fuller's house. Almost predictably, however, the miller returns sooner than anticipated, causing his wife to resort to a ruse comparable to that in the tale of the jar: she hides Philesitherus in a large tub that the miller uses in his work. Again therefore the story gives more attention to trickery than to the actual affair – nothing intimate at all has taken place between the lovers – and as in the previous story the reader might imagine the husband's return and the lover's concealment as something resembling a scene from the comic stage. Yet the reader knows that the story's point of departure, the wife's desire to humiliate her husband, is far from amusing: she has no cause to betray her husband, or none that is revealed, and as far as the reader knows she is simply a terribly wicked woman.

Exasperated by her husband's unforeseen appearance, the miller's wife wants to know why he has returned. So the Ass's long narrative now takes another digressive turn as the miller, completely unaware of what is taking place in his own home, explains what had happened next door. It turns out that the fuller's wife had been involved in an affair for some time, and that when the miller and the fuller had just now arrived for dinner, her lover was actually in the house. Taken unawares, the wife had hidden the lover

under a wicker cage they used in their laundry business – again a completely realistic detail – then proceeded to serve dinner as her husband requested. All was well it seemed, until the lover in the cage began to suffocate from sulphurous fumes, sneezed, and was discovered, whereupon the fuller, in a frenzy caused by the insult to his honour (*Met.* 9.25: *inflammatusque indignatione contumeliae*), tried to kill him but was restrained by the miller, who feared that they would both be in trouble if murder took place. Instead, therefore, they threw the lover out of the house, and the miller persuaded the fuller's wife to leave until her husband, threatening to do harm to them both, had calmed down. The miller then returned to his own home, earlier than planned.[8]

Once more the episode of the cage is suggestive of comic performance. But the climax of the story is far from funny. The fuller's violent assault on the lover, the miller's fears, the violent disposal of the lover, the separation of husband and wife – these are all disturbing elements that hardly leave the reader amused. A sense of moral chaos has in fact now infiltrated the Ass's narrative as a whole, which is compounded by the miller's ironic ignorance of his own wife's behaviour as he tells the story of the fuller and reproaches the fuller's wife. The progression from comedy and farce at the beginning of the sequence to a complete breakdown of conventional morality is both striking and alarming.

The Ass finally brings the story of the miller's wife to an end, prompted by a strong sense of moral propriety that, animal though he is, is very much part of who, or what, the Ass is. Offended by the insult to the miller's honour caused by the wife's duplicity, he determines to disclose the truth. When a servant takes him to be watered, he duly seizes the moment: passing by the tub where Philesitherus is hiding, he crushes the man's protruding fingers, and Philesitherus, in pain, is forced to reveal himself. The miller, however, although immediately realizing what has happened, stays calm, and does not fly into a rage as the fuller had done in similar circumstances. Instead, he quietly tells Philesitherus that he will not kill or use the law against him; he will simply take joint custody of him with his wife; whereupon, having locked his wife in a separate room, he takes Philesitherus to bed and rapes him. Next morning, he beats Philesitherus, chides him, and lets him go, and then sends his wife a notice of divorce.

Once more, Philesitherus's concealment in the tub has an element of the theatrical about it. Yet as in the tale of the wicker cage, the outcome of the miller's story is desperately uncomic. Rape and divorce are serious matters, and whatever humour the story might at first seem to have is lost once the Ass makes his fateful intervention. In its final stage, the story becomes truly tragic. The discarded wife seeks the help of a witch, intending either to

win her husband back, or else to destroy him completely. In the event, he is murdered by a ghost, and his estate is sold off when an adult daughter from a previous marriage arrives to settle her father's estate. What happens to the wife is not revealed, but her original desire to harm the miller is fulfilled. Adultery and familial destruction once more therefore go inexorably hand in hand.[9]

II

Beneath these stories many literary influences can be found, from comedy and tragedy, epic and elegy, the Milesian tale and the mime. For their readers, accordingly, it can be said that a particular pleasure lies in detecting the literary antecedents the stories evoke. The *Metamorphoses* begins after all with an invitation to find enjoyment in the *uariae fabulae* that are to unfold: *Lector intende: laetaberis* (*Met*. 1.1).[10]

The influence of the mime, a popular form of Roman stage entertainment that combined acting with music and dance in comically risqué plots of intrigue and tricksterism, seems especially significant. Although little is known of the mime in detail – it has been called the 'missing link' in Latin literary history – one of its common forms appears to have involved plots in which the stock characters of scheming wife, young lover, and foolish husband were implicated in amusing, if unseemly, stories of illicit love and deception. The clearest evidence is a passage in the *Tristia* of Ovid (2.497–506), where the poet, begging Augustus to commute his sentence of exile, makes the point that the poetry responsible for his banishment was not as harmful as the stage plays that commonly depict adultery: *quid, si scripsissem mimos obscena iocantes, qui semper uetiti crimen amoris habent, in quibus assidue cultus procedit adulter, uerbaque dat stulto callida nupta uiro?* ('Suppose that I'd been the author of indecent farces, which always (a stock charge) portray illicit love, in which the lead constantly goes to some smart seducer, and stupid husbands are conned by their artful wives?' [trans. Green]). The presumption is that everyone in Ovid's day was familiar with these *scaenica … adulteria* ('staged adulteries' [2.514]); indeed, Ovid says as much: they were watched even by senators (2.500–2). To judge from passing allusions in his rhetorical works, the same is probably true of Apuleius's era (*Apol*. 13.7; *Flor*. 4.3, 5.2, 18.4), in which connection the so-called Oxyrhynchus Mime of the second century can be noted, a substantial remnant of a mime in which the main character is a rabidly violent mistress of a household intent on having affairs with her slaves and poisoning her husband. The puritanical comment of Minucius Felix is also apposite: *nunc enim mimus uel exponit adulteria uel monstrat* (*Octavius* 37.12: 'The mime either exposes

or acts out adultery'). The ludic, stage-like aspects of Apuleius's adultery stories – the plotting of clever wives, the surprise entrances of unwitting husbands, the concealment of lovers – are perfectly consistent with what can be recovered of the adultery mime, and noting their debt to the stage tradition may well have been part of the entertainment the stories were meant to provide. Apuleius's familiarity with the pantomime, incidentally, a comparable type of popular entertainment in which actors mimed and danced their parts to musical accompaniment, may be inferred from Book 10 of the *Metamorphoses*, where the Ass views a performance, elaborately described, of the Judgment of Paris.[11]

Stage traditions, however, do not explain everything. In the account that Lucius hears at the outset of his adventures of the horrible effects of Meroe's many adulteries – a lover is spitefully changed into a beaver because he pursued another woman, another has a vengeful spell of perpetual pregnancy cast on his wife, Socrates is destroyed (*Met*. 1.7–19) – there are no obvious debts to drama: no exchanges of dialogue, ruses, or clever deceptions; and the same is true of the later story of the woman who engaged the character Thelyphron to guard her husband's corpse, in which the woman turns out to have been an adulteress who murdered her husband in order to inherit his money and please her lover (2.21–30). This is also the case in the story of the slave *uilicus*.

Moreover, while literary archaeology – the search for generic origins – helps to explain why the main adultery stories are as they are, the proposition that ancient readers were expected to find entertainment in unearthing the literary layers of what they were reading implies knowledge of Apuleius's intentions that are difficult, if not impossible, to verify, and presumes, perhaps anachronistically, that the pleasure putatively derived from the exercise was as great for ancient readers as it now might be for modern academic readers equipped, as they are, with all the resources of lexical research. The questions raised are unanswerable but perplexing: did Apuleius consciously draw on literary traditions as he composed his stories, and if so did he intend his readers to understand his practice and take pleasure from it? Was it typical for readers, even well-educated readers, to read with a demonstrable interest in reading for sources? And no matter what allowance might be made for the emphasis in Roman education on literary memory, how accessible to readers was the range of texts needed for what to present-day readers are variously termed echoes, allusions, and intertexts to be recognized? How could this be known?[12]

Most important of all, literary archaeology does not explain why the theme of illicit love is as prominent in the *Metamorphoses* as it is. Perhaps, therefore, other factors should come into consideration in assessing the

adultery tales. It might be allowed indeed that there was a credible connection between Apuleius's subject matter and what sometimes happened in real life. In an earlier generation, Josephus recorded an account of the seduction of an upper-class woman by a man of equestrian rank that involved priests of Isis and a freedwoman intermediary: the woman's husband informed the emperor of his wife's deception, the emperor investigated, the freedwoman and the priests were crucified, and the lover was exiled (Jos. *Ant*. 65–80). The account is as dramatic and sensationalistic as anything in fiction, but it happens to be true.

The notion I want to propose accordingly is that for most readers the immediate value of the stories of illicit love resided in the effects they created – variously humorous, grotesque, alarming, and admonitory – and that they succeeded, and were indeed selected, because above all they had contemporary resonance: illicit sex was an issue in everyday life. The same could be said, and probably should be said, about the appearance of adultery as a theme in other works of Roman imperial literature, from Ovid through Martial to Suetonius, Tacitus, and Juvenal. There are precise reasons, however, for presuming Apuleius's stories to be topically meaningful, reasons discoverable, I suggest, first in legal sources, and second in sources that concern themselves with notions of imperial comportment.[13]

III

In 18 BC, as part of a sweeping program to reform Roman society, the emperor Augustus passed an extraordinary law that made adultery a criminal offence, the *Lex Julia de adulteriis coercendis*. The law first envisaged a situation in which a woman committing adultery might be discovered *in flagrante* by either her father or her husband in the father's or husband's house. If this happened, the father was permitted to kill the woman and her lover on the spot, and the husband was permitted to kill the lover (as long as he was *infamis* ['formally disgraced']), but not his wife. Second, in situations where a father chose not to kill the offenders caught in the act or a husband was prevented from killing a delinquent wife, or if adultery was discovered but not *in flagrante*, the law required prosecution of the lover in court and, if necessary, of the offending woman. The lover was to be tried first, the woman only if the lover were convicted. A convicted lover lost half his property and was exiled to an island, for an indefinite period of time apparently; while a convicted wife lost half her dowry and one-third of her property and was exiled to a different island with no possibility of marrying a new free-born husband. Both parties were declared *infamis* and lost the right to make a will. Prosecutions were to be brought within sixty days of discovery, either

by a woman's father or husband, or within four months by a third party. A husband who brought charges against his wife was compelled to divorce her, otherwise he was liable to be prosecuted himself for pandering (*lenocinium*). Charges could be brought not only against married women, but also against virgins, widows, and divorcées. A wife, in contrast, was unable to accuse her husband. Men involved in adulterous relationships were accused of *stuprum*, sexually inappropriate behaviour, and were subject to punishment as stated under the *Lex Julia*, but they were technically incapable of committing adultery as the law understood it. The *Lex Julia de adulteriis*, therefore, was inherently suspicious of women and conceptually prejudicial in the way it established adultery as a crime that only women could commit. The law was radically patriarchal in character, and brutal in its penalties. Cases were heard before a specially established court (*quaestio*).[14]

The Augustan adultery law was complex. In purpose, it can be understood as symbolic, an indication of political discourse in the age of Augustus. But this is an unlikely view because much of the evidence for the law comes from refinements that were made in the Antonine and Severan periods and the attitudes and implications of those refinements cannot be read back as evidence of what now are no more than hypothetically presumed debates in the Augustan age. Also, the practical requirements involved in setting up the new *quaestio* were demanding. It is better consequently to regard the original Augustan law as a response to social behaviour designed to establish a sense of stability in society, or at least as a response to perceptions of social behaviour that required stabilizing.[15]

What is most relevant for present purposes, however, is the fact that knowledge of the *Lex Julia* comes principally from legal authorities of the late second and early third centuries, the jurists Paul, Papinian, and Ulpian, whose interest in adultery is visible above all in extracts of their writings now preserved in the *Digest of Justinian*. Their evidence implies that the Augustan law still had currency in their era, and while this could be said of any of the vast range of items from these legal scholars that are found in the *Digest* – their writings, especially those of Ulpian, provide the bulk of the *Digest*'s contents – the jurists seem nonetheless to have had a preoccupation with the law of adultery. It was not the case simply that they refined the original Augustan measure as circumstances required, as for example with the ruling that a father-in-law who had accused his daughter-in-law before a provincial governor could not withdraw his accusation in the hope of profiting from the woman's dowry instead; Paul, Papinian, and Ulpian all wrote separate treatises on the subject, unusually so in the realm of criminal law, which on the assumption that Roman law responded to social need is strong evidence that adultery in their age was a matter of urgent social concern.

By this I mean not that the incidence of adultery in the Roman population of the late second and early third centuries was necessarily greater than in other periods. This may or may not have been the case: in the absence of comparative statistics it is impossible to tell. Rather, I mean that the amount of attention given to the law by the jurists implies a response to a certain level of behaviour that lawmakers were compelled to make. Adultery was sufficiently noticeable, and sufficiently problematical, to provoke continuous legal attention, discussion, and regulation: hence the manifold volumes of the jurists on adultery, adulterers, and the *Lex Julia*.[16]

That this was true throughout the second century is indicated by a sequence of imperial rescripts concerning adultery that are preserved in the *Digest*. From the Julio-Claudian and early Flavian periods there is only one example: Tiberius ruled that it was possible for an accusation of adultery to be made against an office-holder, but allowed that such a case was to be deferred until the person's term expired, the individual concerned having to provide surety meantime to appear in court when he left office.[17]

From the time of Domitian onwards, however, the rescripts become profuse. Domitian stated that slaves who were accused of adultery had to be kept in chains until their cases were concluded, without the benefit of the rules on postponement of trials enjoyed by others. Trajan said that charges of adultery could be renewed if original accusations had been justifiably delayed, and Hadrian, in a rescript to T. Prifernius Paetus Rosianus Geminus (*cos*. ca. 125), in the circumstance that a husband who was still subject to *patria potestas* was allowed to bring an accusation of adultery, said that the husband could make an accusation even against the wishes of his father. Hadrian also extended the rules on taking evidence in adultery cases from slaves by torture, by stating to L. Cornelius Latinianus (*cos*. ca. 124) that slaves outside the household of the man and woman under investigation could be examined; and he issued a ruling to Calpurnius Flaccus, perhaps the proconsul of Crete in 123, that an accusation of adultery against a pregnant woman 'in possession' should be postponed in the interests of the unborn child. Further, Antoninus Pius decided that in a case where a slave-owner's slave had committed adultery with the owner's wife, an accusation against the wife should take precedence over putting the slave to torture for evidence against her; and in a rescript to a certain Apollonius, Pius also ruled that a husband who had caught his wife in the act and had killed her was not to be put to death for homicide, because the pain (*dolor*) suffered provided an extenuating circumstance: if the husband were of lower status, he was to be sentenced to hard labour in perpetuity, if of higher status, he was to be relegated. Marcus Aurelius in turn stated that a slave-owner was permitted to bring an accusation of adultery against his own slave, and allowed the torture of slaves for evidence against their

masters in cases where accusation was made by someone outside the household. Marcus and Commodus jointly ruled that a father required to kill his daughter and her lover caught in the act was not to be punished for homicide if the daughter survived the injuries inflicted in the attempt on her life due to chance rather than the father's intent. They also wrote that a husband who, through a surfeit of pain (*dolor*), killed his wife caught in the act was likewise not liable for homicide under the *Lex Cornelia*, the usual statute. Finally, Septimius Severus and Caracalla stated that an accusation of adultery could be brought against a woman who was betrothed but not yet married, because the expectation of marriage was not to be violated.[18]

By definition, imperial rescripts contained replies to questions presented to emperors for resolution in real-life situations. These items are compelling evidence therefore of a persistent level of adultery in Roman imperial society, and of a persistent need to modify the original Augustan law as new circumstances arose. Occasional records of specific episodes emerge. Pliny (*Ep*. 6.31) tells of a senator who accused his wife of adultery with a centurion before a provincial governor, a case the governor forwarded to Trajan, who in turn heard it at Centumcellae, with Pliny on his *consilium*, enforcing the provisions of the *Lex Julia* although the husband was willing to forgive his wife and not divorce her. There is also Cassius Dio's notorious record (77 [76].16.4) – how accurate it is impossible to tell – that Septimius Severus passed adultery measures which led to such a profusion of accusations, that when Dio himself held the consulship in the early third century he found three thousand indictments pending. (Because few of the cases were prosecuted, Severus paid minimal attention to them, though he is known to have condemned the senator Claudius Gorgus for *lenocinium* when the man accused his wife but failed to divorce her [*Dig*. 48.5.2.6]). The incidents that underlie the imperial rescripts, however, were probably only a few of those that actually occurred, because most cases would never have claimed the emperor's attention. A certain Vitruvius Felix responded to his wife's adultery – her name was Valeria Quadratilla – by seeking vengeance through the non-legal medium of a curse-tablet (*defixio*), appealing for supernatural aid in learning to hate and to lose all memory of his desire for the woman, 'because she first broke faith with … her husband.' The tablet shows a hopelessly disrupted union at a low social level of which an emperor would never know. Decisions, furthermore, made both by jurists and the senate come into the reckoning: under Marcus, jurists ruled that a wife could be charged by her husband in cases where their marriage was not fully valid according to Roman law, and a senatorial decree prohibited marriage between a guardian, or his son or grandson, and his ward under the age of twenty-five, making the guardian liable to a charge of adultery.[19]

Altogether the legal evidence makes indisputably clear that adultery in the age of the Antonines and Severans was a cause of considerable social concern, to which in one generation after another the law reacted in order to maintain and perpetuate traditional standards of propriety, no matter what the indecorous behaviour of individual men and women. It is a matter of debate whether the *quaestio* instituted for adultery trials under the original Augustan law was still in use in the late second and early third centuries, but demand for legal redress of some kind remained. Moreover, while it may be a matter of accident that the jurists' evidence and related material is as it is, preponderant for the second and early third centuries with nothing quantitatively comparable for the first century, it is an arresting body of material nonetheless, to which Christian evidence makes an additional contribution. The *De pudicitia* of Tertullian, composed in the early third century, is a tract that was written in response to an episcopal edict that granted forgiveness to adulterous Christians. The edict probably meant that the culpable were not excluded from the Church and could receive communion. Tertullian vigorously opposed the decision, arguing in his treatise not from law but scripture, yet recognizing all the same that *adulterium* and *stuprum* were distinct legal categories. (For his purposes, there was no substantial difference between them, a view with which Papinian would have agreed [*Pud*. 4.1–3; cf. *Dig*. 48.5.6.1].) The significant point is that adultery was an issue sufficiently prominent in the early third century to generate a bitter debate among early Christian leaders about its spiritual consequences. Tertullian duly opens his work with an encomium of chaste modesty, *pudicitia*, which he calls the flower of virtue (*Pud*. 1.1).[20]

It is against the background of this evidence, I think, that Apuleius's stories of adultery should be read. Exactly when the *Metamorphoses* was composed is unknown. The most that can be said is that it must belong roughly between the mid- or late 140s, when Apuleius was in his twenties and resident for a time in Athens, and the mid-180s, when he was aged about sixty: that is, probably under Antoninus Pius or Marcus Aurelius (138–80). To put it in the 160s, when at least in part of the decade Apuleius was in Carthage, is as good an estimate as any. No matter what the choice, the work belongs to an age throughout which imperial rescripts concerning adultery were regularly issued and other forms of adultery legislation passed. Although no more than broad, the chronological conjunction is clear: the *Metamorphoses* belongs to a context in which an apprehension in society provoked by adultery as illustrated by the law is clearly perceptible.[21]

Two details in the text of the *Metamorphoses* are especially relevant to this suggestion, details that draw from the contemporary historical framework in which the story of Lucius is set (as is well understood).[22]

The first is a direct reference to the *Lex Julia*. In the story of Cupid and Psyche, Jupiter at one point chides Cupid for having harmed his divine reputation by causing him to fall in love with mortal women and to have had various shameful affairs as a result, all, he says, contrary to the laws and public decency, especially the Julian law: *crebrisque terrenae libidinis foedaueris casibus contraque leges et ipsam Iuliam disciplinamque publicam turpibus adulteriis existimationem famamque meam laeseris* (*Met*. 6.22: 'You have defiled me repeatedly with lustful adventures on earth, compromising my reputation and character by low intrigues in defiance of the laws, the *Lex Julia* included'). The passage demonstrably requires the reader to recognize the reference and assumes relevance of the adultery law in contemporary life, all the more so because it occurs in the most fanciful section of the work.

Second, when in the miller's story the miller discovers his wife's lover, he says to Philesitherus: *ac ne iuris quidem seueritate lege de adulteriis ad discrimen uocabo capitis tam uenustum tamque pulchellum puellum, sed plane cum uxore mea partiario tractabo* (*Met*. 9.27: '"I certainly shan't invoke the severity of the law on adultery and demand the death sentence for such a pretty little lad as you. All I'm going to do is share you equally with my wife"'). Here the Julian law is not specified by name, but the assumption that a husband who has come upon, or suspects that he has come upon, his wife's lover will normally bring an accusation against the man in court evidently points to the process defined by the Julian law, which regulated a capital crime (*capitis*), so that the allusion can be to nothing else. Again the detail, casually introduced but full of topical resonance, belongs to a context in which the law of adultery is understood to be at the forefront of popular consciousness.

Taken together these two items unite the fictional world of the *Metamorphoses* with the real world of Rome as represented by the law, and indicate how the adultery tales are not simply the free-floating product of an author's inventive imagination, but are closely related to, and reflective of, items of current social interest at the time of composition. Apuleius knew the law, and he expected his audience to share his knowledge, just as he did when he referred to the Augustan law on marriage at his trial (*Apol*. 87.9–88.7). To the theme of sexual propriety fiction and law are similarly sensitive. It was what Lucius the Ass had called the 'fragility of human trustworthiness' that made law necessary.[23]

Other details from the text make the convergence all the more secure. The world of the *Metamorphoses* is for the most part filled with people of middling or low social status. Barbarus, as seen earlier, is a *decurio* and his wife Arete is well bred (*Met*. 9.17: *generosam*), which gives an indication of the milieu to which the miller and the fuller and their wives also belong. The men

are business owners, the miller at least a slave-owner, and the miller's wife was a woman of some education: Arete had been her schoolmate. Socrates, the victim of Meroe, an innkeeper as well as a witch, had been a commercial speculator of some sort. The anonymous couple in the tale of the jar, by contrast, are paupers. Augustus's adultery law may have been intended in the first instance to regulate the behaviour of the Roman elite, especially in Rome and Italy. By Apuleius's day, however, convictions were expected of people who belonged to both *honestiores* and *humiliores*, the socio-legal categories into which the Roman imperial population was being increasingly divided. This is shown for example by the rescript from Antoninus Pius on differential penalties for husbands who killed their wives caught in the act (*Dig*. 48.5.39 [38].8). The law also applied wherever Roman jurisdiction prevailed. Thus in describing how names, dates, and places had to be specified when an accusation of adultery was made, the jurist Paul stated that the information was to be given to the praetor or the proconsul, which means in both Rome and the provinces (*Dig*. 48.2.3 pr.). The *Metamorphoses* is set for the most part in Macedonia and Achaea. So when a doctor's wife seeks the aid of the governor of Achaea at his residence in Corinth, bringing news of a wicked stepmother who has committed several murders, her careful exposition of the details involved, which included an adulterous item, will have met the jurist's requirements. The consistency between literature and law in matters of status and location is, it seems to me, important.[24]

So too with the emotional responses of injured parties. The law acknowledged that the discovery of a woman's adultery could produce a profound emotional reaction in her betrayed husband: he was expected to feel *dolor*, pain or grief (*Dig*. 48.5.38 [37]), and there were consequences. Thus when a father and a husband were equally aware of a transgression on the part of daughter or wife, precedence in bringing an accusation was given to the husband because his anger (*ira*) and pain (*dolor*) were said to be the greater (*Dig*. 48.5.2.8). Similarly, the decision seen earlier that absolved a husband who had killed his adulterous wife from prosecution for homicide was predicated on the assumption that the killing had occurred when the husband was *impetu tractus doloris* ('led on by the rush of his grief,' *Dig*. 48.5.39 [38].8). In the *Metamorphoses*, comparably, although Barbarus is ultimately outwitted and ends up a complete fool, his immediate response to finding Philesitherus's shoes is a broken heart, *cordolium*, a word of Plautine association but one obviously akin to the law's *dolor*, and not unaffecting (*Met*. 9.21). In a similar situation, the fuller is inflamed and burns with indignation from the insult to his honour caused by his wife's adultery, calling for a sword to kill her lover. In his rage – *tanto calore tantaque rabie perculsus* – he thinks of violence against the woman and himself (9.25), though if he

had killed her, he would have been a candidate for exemption from the *Lex Cornelia*, as Apuleius must surely have known. The slave *uilicus*'s wife is also affected by *dolor*, and takes her revenge because of the *contumelia* her husband's behaviour has brought upon her (8.22). C*ontumelia* is connected to the very Roman concepts of *pudor* and *pudicitia*, terms that connote a sense of propriety and are much in evidence in the *Metamorphoses*, especially in relation to the propriety conventionally expected of women. (The title of Tertullian's treatise will be recalled, and Suetonius's description of Augustus's law as the *Lex Julia de adulteriis et de pudicitia* observed [*Aug*. 34.1].) It is duly notable that in a complex discussion Papinian stated that a woman who remarried, believing that her absent husband was dead, was to be punished when the husband reappeared if she had deceitfully cited the apparent death as an excuse to marry another man: the reason was that she had offended against the claims of *pudicitia* (*Dig*. 48.5.12 [11].12).[25]

Finally under this rubric, a detail from the *Apology*. At his trial in Sabratha, Apuleius viciously attacked his enemy Herennius Rufinus of Oea, stating that Herennius had been a catamite as a boy, a sexually profligate actor as a youth, and now as a married man kept his house as a brothel and pandered for his wife (*Apol*. 74–5). To assault an opponent in court in this way was a standard rhetorical tactic in Roman antiquity, dependent on cultural assumptions that the credibility of witnesses at trials bore a direct relationship to their social character and standing (*mores*). The insults will have been understood for what they were. As Apuleius saw it, Herennius Rufinus was the chief architect of the charges that had been made against him. The rhetoric, however, included details that went beyond the predictable: Herennius and his wife were said to have operated a blackmail scheme, whereby the wife's lovers thought to have brought too little cash to pay for her services might suddenly find themselves 'caught in the act' by the husband (*Apol*. 75: *pro adulteris deprehenduntur*), with escape possible only on the signing of a promissory note for later compensation. If the scheme were genuine, it depended on the application of the Augustan adultery law and the attention the law gave, first, to a woman being caught with her lover *in flagrante* and, second, to the profiteering of a complaisant husband. If not, Apuleius could still assume a widespread knowledge of the adultery law and of its relevance to everyday life in a Roman province on his audience's part. In either case, his record attests, once more, the currency of the Augustan law in the Antonine age.[26]

IV

In Roman society of the imperial age, the emperor and his family were the objects of constant public attention and scrutiny. Interest in their marital

and sexual comportment was keen from the inception of the Principate. Often they could appear as models of decorous behaviour, as when at the outset of the Antonine age Trajan was lauded as an exemplary husband in the younger Pliny's *Panegyricus* (83.4, 7–8). Through the second and early third centuries imperial women were especially associated through the medium of the coinage with the allegorized figure of Pudicitia: veiled and heavily draped, full of religious reverberations, but serving above all as a symbol of female chastity, Pudicitia accompanied images on coins of Sabina, the elder Faustina, the younger Faustina, Lucilla, Crispina, and Julia Domna, establishing them all as paragons of Vestal-like propriety. There were special occasions, moreover, when virtues could be publicly acclaimed. Such was the case when Hadrian delivered the funeral oration for his mother-in-law Matidia in December 119 and was able, despite his grief, to speak of Matidia as a woman most dear to her husband, who in the full flower of life had long lived as a widow, beautiful and chaste, respectful of her mother, generous as a mother herself, loyal to her family, a help to all and a burden to none, and in no way sad. Similarly, when the elder Faustina died in 141, the decurions of Ostia honoured the outstanding concord of her union with Pius and prescribed that young men and women on the point of marriage were to offer prayers at a public altar to the imperial couple. Twenty years later, the harmonious reunion of Pius and Faustina was celebrated, at Pius's death, in a sculptural relief on a memorial column commissioned by Marcus and Lucius Verus showing the couple's joint apotheosis.[27]

Image and reality, however, did not always coincide. Disjunctions between ideal comportment and actual behaviour were suspected, noted, and talked about: two hundred years after his death, the same Antoninus Pius was lampooned for his rashness in love. Whether true or items of mere allegation, the stories that arose about emperors and their family members are another category of evidence against which the *Metamorphoses* can be read. They form an important contributory factor in accounting for the social tension about sexual deportment in general, and adulterous behaviour in particular, that literature and the law reveal.[28]

For the emperors of the first two dynasties, Suetonius's *Caesares* provides irrefutable evidence of the public appetite for knowledge of, and gossip about, imperial private life, and of the political impact imperial conduct had, for good or ill. A rubric on emperors' marriages and details of their aberrations are standard features of his biographies. For the Antonines and Severans, the consular Marius Maximus, coeval with Cassius Dio, continued Suetonius's collection, and while his imperial lives have not survived, remnants exhibiting a taste for the sensationalistic have been detected in the *Historia Augusta*, the late fourth-century sequence of Latin imperial

biographies compiled by an unidentifiable author who embellished and added to materials he found in various earlier sources. The *Historia Augusta* is often factually unreliable, and how much is pure invention it is impossible to say. But whatever their origin, some details can be listed as evidence of how rumour and allegation circulated. They suggest that gossip might well extend to concern about the state of society at large: it is unusual in the Augustan history, for instance, when a ruler is remembered for his moderate private comportment (*HA Sev. Alex.* 39.2).[29]

First, Aelius Caesar, a man of voluptuous appetites, who is said to have built a special bed for use with his concubines filled with rose leaves and covered with lilies. When his wife complained about his affairs he reportedly replied: *Patere me per alias exercere cupiditates meas; uxor enim dignitatis nomen est, non uoluptatis* ('Suffer me to engage in my desires with other women, for "wife" is the name of a duty, not of a pleasure'). Whatever its authenticity, the remark is a telling comment on marriage among the Roman elite, a complete contrast to the idea of marriage as a source of pleasure known from Apuleius's story of Cupid and Psyche. Commodus, next, was remembered as sexually sensational: he kept 300 beautiful concubines in his palace, both *matronae* and *meretrices*, together with 300 beautiful catamites. There were affairs with his sisters, and he liked to watch. When his wife, perhaps not surprisingly, was caught in an affair of her own, he exiled and then killed her. Then there was Pertinax, who incurred reproach for not caring about his wife's reputation (*pudicitia*) when she became involved with a lyre player, and who brought disgrace on himself through an affair he had with Marcus's daughter, Cornificia. In turn, Septimius Severus was brought to court on a charge of illicit love as a young man, but was acquitted after defending himself before the proconsul of Africa, Julianus. Severus's wife Julia Domna later became notorious as an adulteress, but Severus took no action against her. A detail notable in view of the connection between Apuleius's adultery stories and the history of the Roman mime concerns Heliogabalus, whose extravagances went far beyond the sensationalistic: he is reported to have insisted that the sex in adultery mimes should be real, not simulated (*HA Heliog.* 25.4).[30]

Adultery on the stage also features in the Augustan biography of Marcus Aurelius, who was once in the audience, it is said, when the fool in a mime (a *stupidus*, here a gullible husband) asked a slave character the name of his wife's lover. The slave gave the name 'Tullus,' and said it three times. When the fool repeated the question, the slave said: *iam tibi dixi ter, Tullus dicitur* ('I have told you three times, Tullus'), words which caused an uproar because everyone, Marcus included, knew that 'Tertullus' was the name of the lover of Marcus's wife the younger Faustina: the emperor was said to

have once come upon the pair having breakfast together. The story is amusing, and unexpected of the author of the *Meditations*. But like all the details listed, it affirms the importance of sexual decorum as a factor governing the overall reputation of every emperor, even a 'good' emperor like Marcus, who was known more positively, as it happens, for his attention to the questionable standards of morality kept by certain Roman matrons and young men of the nobility (*HA Marcus* 23.8). Long after her death, Marcus paid tribute to his wife in the *Meditations* (1.17.8) for her obedience, affection, and simplicity; and in 176 the senate decreed that silver statues of Marcus and Faustina were to be placed in the temple of Venus and Rome, and that couples about to marry should sacrifice before an altar there. Nonetheless, if not an adulterer himself, the weakness Marcus was thought to have revealed in his inability to keep his wife under control shamed him, making him a laughing stock like the *stupidus* of the stage. This was not the Marcus of the Capitoline reliefs, an example of Roman manhood (*uirtus*) for emulation.[31]

Faustina's reputation for infidelity was indeed terrible. Her marriage to Marcus lasted thirty years and they had many children (not all of whom survived). Even so, Tertullus was only one of her lovers. There were affairs with pantomime actors, sailors, and gladiators, even with her son-in-law Lucius Verus. Most sensationally, her son Commodus was said to have been fathered by a gladiator for whom Faustina once openly confessed her passion. The Chaldaeans duly dictated a rite of expiation: intercourse with her husband after she had bathed in the blood of the sacrificed lover (*HA Marcus* 19.1–4, 19.7, 23.7; *Verus* 10.1). The truth of the story, a *fabella* as daring as anything in Apuleius, is immaterial. The point is that it was the kind of popular report that made its way into and affected society, in complete contrast to the traditional ideals of Roman womanhood promoted, in art and sculpture, by official portraiture. It was understandably held against the emperor that he had promoted the public careers of Faustina's lovers (*HA Marcus* 29.1–3).[32]

Material of this sort is historically valuable for two reasons. First, its presumption that adulterous behaviour was to be expected at the highest levels of society is consistent with the presumptions in legal sources about marriage in society at large, and may be taken to confirm the sense of social tension there evident. For imperial figures, *fides* in marriage did not altogether translate into the romantically divine union represented in the *Metamorphoses* by the story of Cupid and Psyche. Society knew this, and the effect was unsettling. Second, the material suggests something of the knowledge that readers brought with them about emperors and their relatives to their reading of the *Metamorphoses* and the special connections that could consequently be made. In Book 1, for example, there is a minor female character named Panthia. Like Meroe, she is a witch, whom she assists in the

gruesome disposal of the unfortunate Socrates. To some modern readers she evokes association with Isis, because the adjective 'pantheia' ('all-embracing divinity') is an epithet sometimes attributed to the goddess, or else with Dionysus, because the preparations the witches make for Socrates' murder involve wine, the god's divine discovery. Readers of Apuleius in the later second century, however, are just as likely to have made a more immediate connection, namely, with the cultivated, beautiful, and notoriously captivating Pantheia of Smyrna, who in the early 160s became the mistress of Lucius Verus and remained his lover even after his marriage to one of Marcus's daughters.[33]

V

As seen earlier, the *Metamorphoses* was composed under Antoninus Pius or possibly Marcus Aurelius, and Apuleius presumably had some knowledge of both. But if his work takes the presence of the Roman emperor in its world for granted, it never names an individual ruler. Might the influence of one emperor in particular nonetheless be felt or detected? If so, it is the influence not of Pius or Marcus but the influence, I suggest, of Hadrian, the emperor at the time of Apuleius's birth and the first ruler of whom he can have formed a living impression. Hadrian died in 138. Apuleius was then in his early or middle teens, and was soon afterwards studying in Carthage. He can be expected to have known as a youth that Hadrian had visited the city, renamed it after himself, and shown it generosity, as he did to other African cities. He can also be expected to have learned that Hadrian had paid special attention to the promotion of military discipline in Africa, visiting troops stationed on the southern frontiers and addressing them on the need for military preparedness and vigilance. Later as he journeyed to Athens and eventually Rome to pursue his studies, Apuleius will also have seen, everywhere he went, the signs of Hadrian's power and magnificence, in the great builder's monumental architecture, for instance, and in the ubiquitous images of the ruler, now a god, such as those at Athens in the Old Agora or, close to the very image of Zeus Olympios, in the Olympieion nearby. They long continued to appear. On the great altar at Ephesus that was built some time after 169, Hadrian was put prominently on display as an elderly man in a scene of adoption with Pius and Marcus and the boy Lucius Verus. Everyone who saw it will have understood, as surely did Apuleius himself, that Hadrian was the architect of a grand dynastic scheme that had brought all three men to the throne.[34]

There was also the remarkable cult of Antinous, another new god. It was a cult of extreme audacity, established not by the Roman senate through a

formal vote of *consecratio*, but by an absolute monarch determined to impose his will on society and to deify his former favourite regardless of constitutional niceties. To the distress of Christian polemicists, it flourished in the middle years of the century, preserving the memory of Hadrian's infatuation for the Bithynian boy. A measure against homosexual activity passed by Antoninus Pius was to draw the approval of Marcus Aurelius (*Med*. 1.16). But the relationship between Hadrian and Antinous will have lingered in the minds of many as a result of religious celebrations, including the mind of a devotee of *doctrina* who as a young man had written homoerotic poetry in the same tradition as Hadrian and had appealed to the emperor's example when his verses were held as a reproach against him at his trial in Sabratha (*Apol*. 11; cf. *HA Hadr*. 14.9). In death as in life, Hadrian was a controversial figure whose personal history continued to raise in mid-century issues of private comportment. Various items in the *Metamorphoses* suggest that he was still at the forefront of public consciousness when Apuleius composed the work.[35]

First, Apuleius tells in Book 8 how the jealous villain Thrasyllus disposed of Charite's husband Tlepolemus (*Met*. 8.4–5). A hunting expedition was arranged, in which the man who had defeated Thrasyllus in the quest for Charite's hand was killed, leaving the way open for Thrasyllus to court Charite a second time. It happened that the two men found themselves alone facing a wild boar. Thrasyllus encouraged Tlepolemus to give chase, but craftily wounded Tlepolemus's horse with his spear, whereupon Tlepolemus fell helplessly to the ground, the boar attacked, and Thrasyllus quickly slew him. Bringing the report that Tlepolemus had been killed by the boar, Thrasyllus then tried to seduce Charite, but in due course Tlepolemus's ghost wondrously revealed the murderous truth and Charite took her dreadful revenge.

The hunt was an appropriate sport for aristocrats. In Apuleius's narrative, Thrasyllus and Tlepolemus ride on horseback into the country armed with spears and lances; they have retainers equipped with hunting nets to assist them – they flee at the first sight of the boar – and there is a pack of hounds trained to track down prey. The scene Apuleius describes may have literary reminiscences, perhaps of Aeneas and Dido before they entered the cave in which shelter was found from a tempest (Virg. *Aen*. 4.182–220), and the terrifying description of the boar he gives may owe something to the influence of rhetorical theorists. More immediately, however, the scene brings to mind illustrations of the grand hunt seen in Roman mosaics, paintings, and sarcophagi, where the same realistic elements frequently recur: hunters on horses, beaters, dogs, nets, spears and lances, and the huge wild boar itself, all variously conjuring up thoughts of Meleager, Hippolytus, and Adonis, but

expressing, above all, the importance of the hunt as a central item of Roman elite culture. In the small hunt at Piazza Armerina, a hunter is shown on the ground in danger of attack from a charging boar held at bay by two dogs, while a companion thrusts his spear at the animal and a third figure looks on in dismay as a fourth holds a rock above his head preparing to hurl it at the beast. Apuleius's description and the mosaic share a common intensity of representation.[36]

Apuleius's readers will inevitably have been familiar with images like this. They will also have been familiar with Hadrian's life-long devotion to the sport, an enthusiasm that ended only with age and infirmity, and they will have known that hunting was one of the ties that had bound him to Antinous. The emperor had founded cities and written poems to commemorate his exploits. His prowess was preserved by depictions on coins and medallions and in sculptures that contemporaries could see long after his death – the intrepid conqueror of boar and bear who most memorably of all was said once to have saved Antinous from a dangerous lion when they were in the Cyrenaica together, perhaps precisely in September of the year 130. The event is known from a poem written for Hadrian by the prophet Pancrates (Athenaeus 15.677d–f), and from fragments of what may be the same or an independent composition that notably describes the lion much as Apuleius describes the boar that attacked Thrasyllus (*P. Oxy.* 1085). When considered in its second-century context, the hunting scene in the *Metamorphoses* demands recollection of Hadrian's grand passions, both for the hunt and for Antinous.[37]

So too, second, with its sequel, as Charite, in shock after hearing of Tlepolemus's death, assuages her grief by deifying her husband: *diesque totos totasque noctes insumebat luctuoso desiderio, et imagines defuncti, quas ad habitum dei Liberi formauerat, adfixo seruitio diuinis percolens honoribus, ipso se solacio cruciabat* (*Met*. 8.7, 'All her days and nights were passed in mourning her loss; she had images of the dead man made as the god Liber, which she worshipped with divine honours, giving herself wholly over to this service – a consolation that was itself a torment'). Romans commonly memorialized the dead with portraits that displayed divine attributes, including those of Liber. Tertullian railed against the practice (*Nat*. 1.10.26–7). Charite, however, does what Hadrian had done: she establishes a new cult of her beloved and sets up images of him as Dionysus everywhere. When her story was first read, images of the real new god Antinous could be seen in profusion from one end of the empire to another, and Liber was one of his most common forms. The connection could not be missed, and contemporaries will have remembered the story that when Antinous died Hadrian had wept for him like a woman (*HA Hadr*. 14.5).[38]

Third, in Book 7 the bandit Haemus, who it later emerges is really Tlepolemus in disguise, tells the story of the exemplary noblewoman Plotina, who accompanied her falsely accused procuratorial husband into exile, and one night saved the inn in which they were lodging from the ravages of the robber band led by Haemus himself (*Met*. 7.6–7). It does not matter that the story is a fabrication, that Haemus is making it all up: he has to convince his audience, a larger band of bandits, and Apuleius's readers reading the story for the first time cannot yet know who he really is. Already astonishing, the story becomes more astonishing still: after saving the inn, Plotina successfully petitioned the Roman emperor to pardon her husband and to punish the robbers. Haemus reports: *Denique noluit esse Caesar Haemi latronis collegium et confestim interiuit: tantum potest nutus etiam magni principis. Tota denique factione militarium uexillationum indagatu confecta atque concisa ipse me furatus aegre solus mediis Orci faucibus ad hunc euasi modum* (*Met*. 7.7, 'That was that; the Emperor willed that Haemus the robber's company should cease to exist, and cease to exist it did. Such is the power of a great prince's mere wish. Our entire band was hunted down, cut to pieces, and exterminated by detachments of soldiers; I alone just managed to escape from the very jaws of Orcus').

Apuleius's Plotina is a model of female faithfulness, full of marvellous qualities: bravery, self-sacrifice, intelligence, resourcefulness, and, as the mother of ten children, exceptional fecundity. And she is Plotina, a woman whose name can have conjured up only one association for Apuleius's readers, and that is with Pompeia Plotina the wife of Trajan, to whom, it was believed, Hadrian owed everything for his success in life. It was Plotina who had secured his marriage to Sabina, Trajan's grand-niece, his appointment as governor of Syria during Trajan's Parthian campaign, his designation to a second consulship (*HA Hadr*. 10.2, 4.1, 4.3–4; for the year 118), and, as far as anyone knew (and coinage seemed to confirm), it was Plotina who, in late July or early August 117, as her husband lay dying at Selinus in Cilicia and Hadrian waited anxiously for news in Antioch, had effected the adoption that sealed Hadrian's succession (*HA Hadr*. 4.10; Cass. Dio 69.1.1–2). Her public reputation could not be forgotten. Pliny had earlier extolled her as the paragon of ancient matronly virtue, modest in her dress and the number of her attendants, a tribute in her wifely obedience to the way her husband had fashioned her (*Pan*. 83–4). Portraits displayed and kept alive the memory of her fidelity. Lesser mortals took or were given her name because of its social resonance, and when she died Hadrian made her a goddess, 'building her a temple and composing some hymns about her' (Cass. Dio 69.10.3[1]–3a).[39]

For readers encountering Plotina's name in the *Metamorphoses*, the role she had played in Hadrian's life must at once have sprung to their minds.

Some may have remembered that she had successfully petitioned him on behalf of the school of Epicureans at Athens to open its headship to non-Roman citizens, and had duly written to its members: 'We have what we were so eager to obtain … For this fine grant of authority, we owe a debt of gratitude to him who is in truth the benefactor and overseer of all culture and therefore an emperor most worthy of reverence, and to me very dear in every way as both an outstanding guardian and a loyal son.' Some may have remembered the rumour of an 'erotic friendship' between them (Cass. Dio 69.10.3[1]). Plotina and Hadrian had been close in age.[40]

Fourth, a correspondence can be drawn between Hadrian and Apuleius's Lucius, the central character of the *Metamorphoses*. Hadrian was remembered as a complex, enigmatic personality full of contrasting features, making him on a modern view a truly authentic figure: 'not a hero or a villain, not a conventional artefact or a political projection,' but 'something like a character in a modern novel' – even 'an intellectual.' Undeniably Hadrian had the intellectual's curiosity. He was the true author of the book of marvels attributed to his freedman Phlegon; he was devoted to the arts and architecture, wrote poetry, was expert in arithmetic, geometry, and music, and he knew all about weapons and military matters (*HA Hadr*. 14.8–11). Tertullian described him indeed as *omnium curiositatum explorator (Apol*. 5.7, 'the investigator of all kinds of curiosities'), and his reputation for 'prying into hidden things' was maintained in late antiquity in Julian's *Caesares* (311D). On a low estimate, the author of the *Historia Augusta* noted that he was inquisitive about his household and the private lives of others (*HA Hadr*. 11.4: *curiosus*). The connection is obvious. Lucius is an inquisitive young man with a predilection for all kinds of knowledge whose incurable curiosity (*curiositas*) is the cause of his transformation into animal form, a characteristic that remains with him all through his adventures, so that the common appetite that he shared with Hadrian was a feature, I imagine, that no Antonine reader of the *Metamorphoses* could possibly miss. Hadrian had spent much of his twenty-one-year reign journeying from one end of the Roman world to the other. So too the Corinthian Lucius travels to Thessaly in search of magical knowledge, and as the Ass he travels far and wide before, once more in human form, he arrives in Rome to complete his initiation into the mysteries of the Egyptian gods. His long voyage of discovery clearly recalls the journeys of Hadrian – if not the *longa peregrinatio* of Apuleius himself, to which he drew attention at his trial (cf. *Apol*. 23.2).[41]

The Augustan life has relatively little to say about Hadrian that is sexually scandalous. It is one of the most sober and reliable in the whole collection. But three items have some relevance: first, the caustic remark

attributed to the emperor that, had he been a private citizen, he would have divorced his wife Sabina because of her shrewishness (*HA Hadr*. 11.3); second, the reproach that Hadrian habitually had affairs with men and married women (*HA Hadr*. 11.7); third, a brief reference to the inexplicable death of Antinous, for which his excessive infatuation was thought by some to have been responsible (*HA Hadr*. 14.5–6: *nimia uoluptas*).[42]

VI

The dangers and tensions associated with physical love in the *Metamorphoses* are dispelled in the final book when Lucius discovers through Isis a spiritual love that transports him into a world of emotion previously unknown. Isis restores Lucius to human form, and he becomes her enraptured devotee. The earthly desires of the body that had occasioned such misfortune give way to the new experience of divine love, as Lucius is uplifted into perfect Platonic communion with the goddess. It is a climactic discovery, a joyful conclusion.[43]

The end result had been anticipated, though not guaranteed, by the fairy tale inserted in the middle of the work telling of a romance between the god Cupid and the mortal Psyche that ends in marriage and the birth of a child named Joy (*Voluptas*). The romance had seen many hardships, especially for Psyche: it brought separation from her parents, hostility from her jealous sisters, and even at one stage alienation from Cupid when she disobeyed his command and dared to uncover his true identity. All along, too, Psyche had had to contend with resentment from Cupid's mother, Venus, who subjected her to a series of cruel ordeals. Miraculously, however, Psyche overcame the ordeals, and in the end Cupid found a way to unite her to him: he solicited the aid of Jupiter, who conferred on Psyche the gift of immortality. The story is a story, above all, about 'the meeting of soul and sexual love,' and it concludes accordingly with a heavenly wedding feast, at which Venus, now appeased, dances, and the announcement of the joyous outcome of a perfect union: it is Jupiter's will that the marriage will last for ever, and through his generosity it becomes a legitimate marriage of equals, as a Roman marriage should be, not the unequal relationship Venus, as though a Roman aristocrat, had found so disgraceful. It provides a properly respectable outlet for the sexual energies of Cupid, to whose reputation for destroying marriages through adulterous affairs Jupiter is especially sensitive (*Met*. 4.30, 6.9, 6.23). The tale became an inspiration to painters and sculptors in both antiquity and successive ages. As the reader returns to the principal story, there is hope that the ordeal to which Lucius's transgressions have led might soon be overcome in a similarly harmonious way.[44]

On a traditional view, Latin literature entered into decline in the second century, with no notable contributions after Tacitus and Juvenal until the renaissance of the fourth century (some Christian products perhaps apart). Yet the literature that has survived from antiquity is no more than a fraction of all that was written, and theories of decline (and rise) are inherently vulnerable to questions of evidence and accident. They are also vulnerable to issues of taste. A generation ago Apuleius was an author little appreciated or scrutinized, despite his potential appeal to historians (at least) as a provincial of decurial background who, in the middle of the century, made his way to Rome and gained entrée to elite circles. A new body of rich critical scholarship, however, has revealed his originality, and precocity.[45]

Apuleius claimed to be a writer of history (*Flor*. 20.5–6; cf. 9.28), a branch of literature he has Lucius characterize in the *Metamorphoses* as the domain of learned men engaged with the high and mighty (*Met*. 6.29, 8.1, 7.16). Two fragments of an *Epitome of History* are preserved by Priscian. The claim should not be a surprise. History had been the conventionally predominant form of Latin prose literature, and Apuleius's literary ambitions were all-encompassing. Contemporary readers, of course, will soon have seen that the *Metamorphoses* was something very different – something novel, with few antecedents. The predominant form, nonetheless, may have conditioned the way that the *Metamorphoses* was first read and received. With its focus on a single individual it could easily have seemed to some to resemble biography, a form familiar enough in the second century after Suetonius and his emulators, but since the rise of the imperial system history had long assumed a biographical aspect, as decisions about war and politics, history's traditional subject matter, were made by great princes who ruled for the duration, not for limited intervals of time like the magistrates of bygone days, and not with colleagues but alone and autocratically – by their nod, as Apuleius, recall, has Lucius say (cf. *Met*. 7.7: *tantum potest nutus etiam magni principis*). Apuleius's work told a story, as history did, not a story indeed of the fortunes of the *res publica*, but a story of an unwitting pilgrim's progress from asininity to redemptive self-knowledge, and it explained the story, as history did, by identifying the causes of the transformations it described. Almost from the beginning, its hero anticipates that his biography may become a great history, in several volumes (*Met*. 2.12).[46]

From this point of view, Roman readers will almost naturally have expected Apuleius's work to bear a moral meaning. History was inherently practical and didactic, its purpose to give instruction on how to sustain Rome's present and increase its future greatness by displaying examples from the past of individual conduct that had either promoted or hindered the development of its power. The character of its leading citizens determined

the course of Rome's progress, and character was assessed moralistically in terms of demonstrable qualities and defects. History celebrated virtues and condemned vices.[47]

The *Metamorphoses* can hardly be construed as an alternative kind of history, to be read in the first instance like history proper by the 'aristocracy of the intellect' and one from which lessons might be learned. Interpreting the story of Lucius allegorically was one improving technique that appealed to generations of later readers, from late antiquity to the Renaissance; but allegory, I suspect, was not the didactic aspect on which Apuleius's Antonine readers, habituated to traditional forms of historiography, will immediately have seized. Something more direct may be imagined, consistent with the firm anchoring of the fictions and fantasies of the *Metamorphoses* in the realities of the contemporary world. A question about religious identity emerges as the work's ultimate issue. Beforehand, however, other concerns are raised, one of which is the issue of illicit love. To explore this subject was by definition to engage in moralistic discourse, and to encourage reflection. In essence, the adultery stories may have been intended to do no more than divert their readers: it is impossible to know what was in their author's mind when he composed them. But in telling the stories Apuleius captured the complexity of attitudes to sexual comportment in the high imperial age, and historical meaning emerges from them. Traditionally Roman society set high standards of marital propriety for its citizens, and Augustus's criminalization of adultery raised them to an even higher level. Human frailty, exacerbated by the manipulable character of marriage, especially among the elite, inevitably led to lapse; and lapse was all the more noticeable when it involved those at the very summit of society, the superhuman as it seemed from their official images, whose responsibility it was to regulate public morality, but whose private lives, so rumour had it, were often far from praiseworthy. Apuleius's stories, sometimes humorous, always unsettling, speak to the tensions that the transgression of conventional moral boundaries raised. Reflective readers, alert to the evolution of law and sensitive to the examples, real or imagined, endlessly discussed and embellished, that emperors and their households set, may have shuddered, once their smiles had faded, as they recalled from their history books the historical monsters of old: Catiline, Sempronia, Sejanus. What cannot be denied is the convergence of interest in adultery that fiction and conventional historical evidence in the Antonine era display. I think it possible that one explains the other.[48]

APPENDIX

Prominent scholarly contributions provide synopses of what is known of Apuleius's life (e.g., Sandy 1997: 1–41; Harrison 2000: 1–38). Details are few: nothing like a modern literary biography can be attempted. His date of birth was approximately 125, his place of birth almost certainly Madauros. A period of childhood education was spent in Carthage, and a period of adult study in Athens. Visits to Samos and Asia Minor are attested, perhaps during the Athenian period, as also later to Rome. The year of the trial, 158/9, is relatively secure. Apuleius was in Carthage in the 160s, and could have survived into perhaps the 180s, but his date of death is unknown. Here I introduce some epigraphic and legal items with suggestions that may enhance the outline.

1. *Apol*. 24.1 implies that Apuleius was, or imagined himself to be, of native African origin. As seen earlier, Thompson (1969; cf. Lassère 1977) maintained that by the second century the ruling classes of Roman Africa were a mixed population comprising the descendants of Italian immigrants and Romanizing Africans. For Madauros, however, it is notable that Ap(p)uleii do not appear among the large number of families of indigenous background (cf. Thompson 1969: 178–80). Harrison (2000: 4 n. 13) lists epitaphs from Madauros and other sites in Algeria that identify the following individuals: C. Apuleius Rogatus, dead at 64 (*ILAlg*. 2276–7, Madauros); [Ap]uleius Rufus, dead at 23 (*ILAlg*. 2278, Madauros); Apuleia Quarta, dead at 15 (*ILAlg*. 2279, Madauros); Apulaeus Datianus Ponponianus (*ILAlg*. 2236, Madauros [perhaps to be read as 'Pomponianus']), who died in infancy at the age of 1 year, 4 months, 6 days (Gsell [*ad ILAlg*. 2236] proposed from the appearance of the words *thus* and *piper* on the monument to which Datianus's inscription belongs that the head of his family was a perfume and spice merchant); C. Apuleius Gudullus, dead at 65 (*ILAlg*. 3178, Theveste); Apuleius

Miggin, dead at 26 (*ILAlg.* 3179, Theveste); C. Apuleius Martis, dead at 60 (*ILAlg.* 3601, Theveste region); Sexta Apuleia Fortunata (*ILAlg.* 3602, Theveste region); and a second Apuleia Quarta (*ILAlg.* 1412, Thubursicu Numidarum, modern Khamissa). There is also Apuleius Missor (?) (*CIL* VIII 1908, Theveste).

The name Datianus, akin to Dativus, suggests indigenous stock (cf. Lassère 1977: 86). Comparably also the following: Rogatus, Gudullus, Miggin, Fortunata (cf. Lassère 1977: 341, 346, 454 [Rogatus]; 381 n. 139 [Gudulio], 383 n. 162 [Gudula]; 341, 452 [Miggin; cf. Gsell *ad ILAlg.* 2803]; 86, 341 [Fortunatus]); cf. similarly Donatus, the *cognomen* of two third-century soldiers of Legio III Augusta, C. Apulius Donatus, *uexillarius*, and M. Apuleius Donatus, perhaps a cavalryman (Le Bohec 1989: 226, 331, with Lassère 1977: 341, 346); and the *cognomina* of M. Apuleius Fortunatus, dead at 30 (*CIL* VIII 11916, Thiggiba) and Apuleia Rogata, dead at 83 (*AE* 2004.1722a, Limasa [= Ben Abdallah 2004: no. 58]). Gaius as a *praenomen* is notable in the cases of the first Donatus, Rogatus, Gudullus, and Martis; cf. C. Apuleius Cr[…], a third-century soldier (Le Bohec 1989: 330). But there is L. Apuleius Barbarus (*ILAlg.* 39, Hippo Regius), L. Apuleius Felix, a veteran at Lambaesis (Lassère 1977: 276–7; Le Bohec 1989: 290), M. Apuleius Donatus, Q. Apuleius Martialis, a second-century soldier from Carthage (*CIL* VIII 18084; cf. 23884, Bisica: Q. Apuleius Martialis, dead at 71), and T. Appuleius (*CIL* VIII 1032, Carthage).

A complete inventory of Appulei in North Africa is not to my knowledge available at present, but a number of other individuals may be noted: Apuleius Licinianus (*CIL* VIII 331, Ammadaera), Ap]uleius Crescens, a soldier of the Severan period (*CIL* VIII 18073, Lambaesis), Apuleia (*CIL* VIII 15934, Sicca Veneria), Apuleia Liciniana (*CIL* VIII 15935), and a plain Apuleius (*CIL* VIII 7068, Cirta). Lassère (1977: 343) found the name also at Thibilis. Of special note is a group from Lamasba, a rural site in southern Numidia, who appear to be members of the same family. They are known from an inscription (*CIL* VIII 18587) that records arrangements for watering local plots of land made in the reign of Elagabalus: Apulius Faustinus, Apulius Rogatianus, Apulius Africanus, Apulius Processus, and Apulius Rogatus. Faustinus was apparently the father of sons, all but one of whom owned contiguous parcels of land. The family of smallholders belonged to a community well within Roman influence in the early Antonine age (see Shaw 1982 [classic], esp. 88). Not to be forgotten is the Tripolitanian Q. Apuleus Maxssimus (*CIL* VIII 22758), whose history clearly establishes indigenous accommodation to Roman culture.

2. *Apol.* 24.8–9 (cf. 24.1) states that Apuleius's father held office as *duumvir* in the colony that was his *patria*, usually understood to be Madauros, the

full name of which was *colonia Flavia Augusta ueteranorum Madaurensium* (*ILAlg.* 2152, as restored by Gsell; see Gsell 1922: 181 for other sources on Madauros's colonial status, and cf. *AE* 1922.16; 1931.41). Apuleius's father held the full range of local offices, which Apuleius indicates with the phrase *cunctis honoribus perfunctum*, a variation of the standard epigraphical formula honouring men of decurial status, *omnibus honoribus functus*. Examples from Roman Africa from the first three centuries of the Principate appear in Bassignano 1974: 54 n. 12: *ILAfr.* 22, Gigthis; 86 nn. 1–2: *CIL* VIII 6304, 11827, Mactar; 131 n. 1: *CIL* VIII 25412, Uzali Sar; 136 n. 1: *CIL* VIII 15827, Masculula; 143 n. 2: *AE* 1955.125, Simitthus; 145 nn. 1–2: *CIL* VIII 25743; *AE* 1951.81, Thuburnica; 161 n. 1: *CIL* VIII 14343, Sidi Abd el Basset; 169 n. 13: *ILAfr.* 283, Thuburbo Maius: 239 n. 5: *AE* 1913.21; 240 n. 7: *AE* 1920.15; 240 n. 9: *CIL* VIII 8318; 240 n. 10: *CIL* VIII 8319; 242 n. 19: *CIL* VIII 7112 = *ILAlg.* II 690, Cirta; 258 n. 22: *AE* 1912.26, Cuicul; 269 n. 3: *AE* 1958.144, Hippo Regius; 285 n. 7: *CIL* VIII 2407, Thamugadi; 354 n. 1: *CIL* VIII 9257, Icosium; 358 n. 1: *CIL* VIII 9030, Auzia. Note typically *Q(uintus) F[urfani]us Q(uinti) f(ilius) Lem(onia) Bellicus omnibus honoribus in col(onia) sua func[tu]s, flam(en) Aug(usti) perp(etuus)* (*AE* 1951.81, Thuburnica).

The father's offices at Madauros will have resembled those held by M. Antonius Martialis Valerianus: *quaestor et aedilis, IIuir, flamen perpetuus* (*ILAlg.* 2056). Other *duumuiri* from Madauros include Q. Obstorius Honoratus, a veteran (*ILAlg.* 2130), Ti. Clodius Loquella (*ILAlg.* 2207, 2131), M. Cornelius Fronto Gabinianus, an *eques*, and his son, M. Cornelius Victorinus, who was twice *duumuir* (*ILAlg.* 2145).

The epigraphic material communicates something of the social context in which Apuleius spent his life, which was not concentrated on the literary arts to the exclusion of all else. His text states: *cuius ego locum in illa re publica, exinde ut participare curiam coepi, nequaquam degener pari, spero, honore et existimatione tueor*. Butler and Owen (1914: 66) comment: 'The sons of *decuriones* were admitted to the local senate as *praetextati*, but had no voice in the actual deliberations of that body' (cf. Hunink 1997 II: 85; Amarelli 1988: 141 n. 144). Hunink (49) renders Apuleius's text, in reference to Apuleius's father: 'It is his position that I upheld in the same town from the moment I first entered the local Senate, being no way inferior to him and earning, so I hope, similar esteem and respect.' If 'entered' means that the young Apuleius was a potential full decurion, he will have been comparable to the *praetextati* listed in the album of Canusium (*CIL* II 338; see Kleijwegt 1991: 308–9; 1993, for *praetextati* as future local councillors admitted to the *curia* at about the age of sixteen but without the right to vote; the standard age for full admission was twenty-five [*Dig.* 50.2.11; cf. *Dig.* 50.2.6.1;

50.3.8: inability to vote under twenty-five]). But in some communities from the Latin West full decurions are attested in the late teenage years or early twenties; see Kleijwegt 1991: 318–19; cf. Laes 2004. Also, *tueor* is strong enough to mean that Apuleius was a full member of the *curia* at the time of his trial (cf. Pavis d'Escurac 1974), unless he is to be thought of as a non-resident honorary decurion (on which category see Nicols 1988). Butler and Owen (1914: 54) translate: 'I myself, immediately after my first entry into the municipal senate, succeeded to my father's position in the community, and, as I hope, am in no ways a degenerate successor, but receive like honour and esteem for my maintenance of the dignity of his position.' This allows for such a possibility.

It may be therefore that decurial obligations were part of the adult Apuleius's life. A local *curia* had to be kept at full strength for the sake of public utility (*Dig*. 50.2.3.2); a list of decurions had to be maintained, in order of seniority, in accordance with the local municipal charter (*Dig*. 50.3.1); and the provincial governor was required to recall absent decurions to ensure that they met their civic obligations (*Dig*. 50.2.1). The responsibilities concerned (*munera*) included supervision of local finances, construction and repair of public buildings, management of the local water supply, service on, and selection of, diplomatic embassies, and the regulation of religious practices. In return, there were legal privileges, preferential seating at public entertainments, and respect and deference from social inferiors. According to Apuleius's contemporary Aulus Gellius, a colony was a miniature replica of Rome, administered according to all the laws and institutions of the *populus Romanus* (*NA* 16.13.8–9). Much could be involved in 'participating' in the *curia*. (For the municipal charters from which decurial responsibilities can be understood, legal sources cited apart, see Lintott 1993: 132–45; cf. Frederiksen 1965; González 1986 with Garnsey 1970: 242–5.)

By the middle of the second century, the term *philosophus*–used in what is commonly taken as Apuleius's inscription from Madauros and repeatedly in the *Apology*–was akin to a title that could exempt its holder from many obligations (tutelages, gymnasiarchy, aedileship, local chief priesthood, billeting of troops, purchase of grain and oil, adjudications, service as ambassador, military service; see *Dig*. 27.1.6.8, a rescript of Antoninus Pius [cf. *Dig*. 27.1.6.5; 50.4.18.30; 50.5.8.4], but some privileges probably dated from the Flavian era, when Vespasian and Domitian extended benefits to teachers and doctors [*AE* 1936.128 = *FIRA* I nos. 73, 77; cf. Sherwin-White 1966: 640–1 on Plin. *Ep.* 10.58.1.]; see *Dig*. 50.4.18.30, Arcadius on exemptions for philosophers from Vespasian and Hadrian, and *Dig*. 50.13.1.4, Ulpian against classifying philosophers as teachers). Millar (2004: 339–40) maintains that exemptions for philosophers were never consistent: 'The question remained

a disputed area of case law in which exemption could be asserted or denied, or restricted to functions involving personal effort, leaving financial obligations intact' (citing Philost., *VS* 1.8; Frag. Vat. 149 ['general immunity']; *Dig*. 27.1.5–7 [*tutela* exemption, property obligations liability]; *Dig*. 50.5.8.4 [active philosophers exempted from *tutela* and personal duties but expenditures left intact]; *CJ* 10.42.6 [Diocletian and Maximian disallow exemption from 'burdens which are imposed on property']). Jerome *Ep*. 138 is often taken to indicate that Apuleius held no public office, but while there is no evidence of a magistracy, on balance it is unlikely that he was exempt from all municipal obligations.

Apuleius was familiar enough with decurial obligations to present authentic material in the *Metamorphoses*: see *Met*. 10.18, Thiasus of Corinth (carefully designated the *caput* of its province), a man of prestige and distinguished family background, who has held various local offices and anticipates becoming *duumuir quinquennalis*, equivalent to Roman censor; to show the generosity (*munificentia*) his fellow citizens expect of him, he prepares for a three-day exhibition of gladiatorial games, and travels to Thessaly to purchase the requisite animals and gladiators in grand style, with costly wagons, carriages, and horses. Note also, however, *Met*. 4.9, the Theban *nummularius* Chryseros, who conceals his wealth in order to avoid office holding and the provision of public entertainments.

3. Q. Lollius Urbicus (*cos*. ca. 136; *PIR*^{2} L 327) is mentioned at *Apol*. 2.11–3.1: before Apuleius's trial he had heard a legal case as *praefectus urbi* in which Apuleius's prosecutor Sicinius Aemilianus had claimed that an uncle's will was a forgery, knowing the claim to be untrue; advised by a *consilium* of former consuls, Urbicus had declared the will apparently valid; Aemilianus protested vigorously and narrowly avoided reprimand; Apuleius now hoped that Urbicus's voice would be heard in his own case to confirm Aemilianus's mendacious character. Urbicus was clearly present at Apuleius's trial (cf. Butler and Owen 1914: 8–9.)

The crime to which Apuleius refers was evidently *falsum*, within the jurisdiction of the *praefectus urbi* since at least 61 (cf. Tac. *Ann*. 14.41). By the Severan period, the *praefectus*'s authority included Rome and Italy up to the one hundredth milestone, but Apuleius's evidence suggests that items from the provinces could be heard as well (cf. Garnsey 1970: 92–7). Sicinius Aemilianus's case was heard at Rome (cf. Butler and Owen 1914: 9), but the process by which it arrived in Urbicus's court is unknown: an initial appeal to the proconsul of Africa, or even the emperor, and subsequent delegation are possible (cf. Garnsey 1970: 96: 'It is likely that Urbicus was directly approached on this occasion, perhaps because *falsum* was an acknowledged specialty of the prefect'). To assume that Aemilianus had sufficient resources

to bring and pursue a case in Rome suggests a different figure from the rustic boor of Apuleius's speech.

For the *praefectus*'s *consilium*, cf. Plin. *Ep*. 6.11: Pliny summoned to serve on an unidentifiable prefect's advisory council in 106/7 ('This would seem to be the only reference to the *consilium* of the City prefect' [Sherwin-White 1966: 367]; 'No prefect of the city … is on attestation under Nerva or in the early epoch of Trajan' [Syme 1988: 616]).

Lollius Urbicus originated from the Cirtan confederation; his mother was a Grania, and he had a maternal uncle named P. Granius Paulus (see sources in *PIR*^{2} L 327). Granii are attested more frequently in the region of Cirta than anywhere else in Africa (Pflaum 1978: 161–98). Representatives, however, are also known from Tripolitania, especially at Lepcis Magna (*IRT* 532, 642, 708, 709). Apuleius was present in Sabratha when prosecuted to defend Pudentilla in a case of her own. Pudentilla's opponents were Granii. Urbicus may therefore have been involved in this case through a family connection (cf. Butler and Owen 1914: 9; Corbier 1982: 722 assumes the Granii of Lepcis – e.g., the Q. Granius Caelestinus of *IRT* 532 – to be the family implicated in Pudentilla's lawsuit; cf. Lassère 1977: 92). His presence at Sabratha in 158/9 becomes duly explicable. He may or may not have still been in office as *praefectus urbi*: Apuleius's *apud praefectum urbi* at *Apol*. 3.1 is ambiguous.

As *praefectus*, Urbicus heard two cases other than that of Sicinius Aemilianus that are on record. One led to the execution of three Christians, one named Ptolemaeus, another Lucius. The latter was summarily despatched after protesting the sentence against the former because no crime such as 'adultery, fornication, murder, clothes-stealing, [or] robbery' had been committed, and the prefect's judgment was therefore unreasonable. Both men confessed to being Christians. Thus Justin, *Apol*. 2.12 = Euseb. *HE* 4.17 (from which Urbicus is 'best known,' according to Hunink 2000a: 88). Justin's *Apology* belongs to ca. 150, by which time the *praefectus urbi* evidently was able to hear charges against Christians. The second case is known from Fronto (*Ad amicos* 2.7), who in the early 160s wrote to a fellow Cirtan, C. Arrius Antoninus, then in office as *iuridicus* in Transpadane Italy (*ILS* 1118; cf. Syme 1988: 432), requesting reinstatement of the decurion Volumnius Serenus, after a period of exile, to the *ordo* of Concordia. Urbicus had earlier heard the case, but had not ruled on it. The date of the event is unknown (see Champlin 1980: 69–70).

Lollius Urbicus's tenure as *praefectus* can be dated from 146 to 160 (Hunink 1997: II 17), with support from *HA Pius* 5.3, according to which Pius replaced no one promoted by Hadrian, and kept good provincial governors in office for seven or even nine years; Pius also replaced no holders of

judicial office, except at his own request Orfitus, that is, Ser. Cornelius Scipio Salvidienus Orfitus (*cos*. 110), who was *praefectus urbi* in 138. The evidence of *HA Pius* 5.3 on long service is false, however, subject according to Syme (1988: 673) to 'a triple demolition.' Orfitus's likely successor as prefect in 138 was Sex. Erucius Clarus (*cos*. II 146), in office probably from 139 to 146 (see Alföldy 1977: 287–8). Urbicus is thought to have succeeded him, but this cannot be certain. His putative terminal date depends on a restoration of a fragment of the *Fasti Ostienses* that seems to require the death of a *praefectus* in 160: [*Q. Lollius Urbicus prae. u*]*rb*; this also is uncertain. Birley (2005b: 140) notes that prefects of the city usually held second consulships soon after appointment, and suggests that because Urbicus did not hold a second consulship, he may not have remained in office as prefect till 160: his likely successor was Q. Junius Rusticus (*cos*. II 162), but when this man took up office is also unknown and depends on the date at which Urbicus left office (Birley 2005b: 136–40.)

Lollius Urbicus began his senatorial career under Hadrian, probably as a *nouus homo*, and saw military service under that emperor in Upper Pannonia and Judaea. He held the consulship ca. 136, and still under Hadrian governed Lower Germany before becoming governor of Britain early in Pius's reign. There he was responsible for starting construction of the Antonine Wall. Then followed the very distinguished position of *praefectus urbi*. The recorded cases that Urbicus tried may have been known to Apuleius, who was probably in Rome in the mid-150s, perhaps associated with other Africans in the circle of Fronto. Urbicus was not, however, acting as a 'judge' at Apuleius's trial (Hunink 1997: I 18), though conceivably he could have been a member of Claudius Maximus's *consilium*. The uncertainty surrounding his tenure as prefect needs to be recognized. It is possible that in 158/9 he was in Africa in retirement, at the conclusion of a very distinguished career.

SUPPLEMENT OF IMAGES

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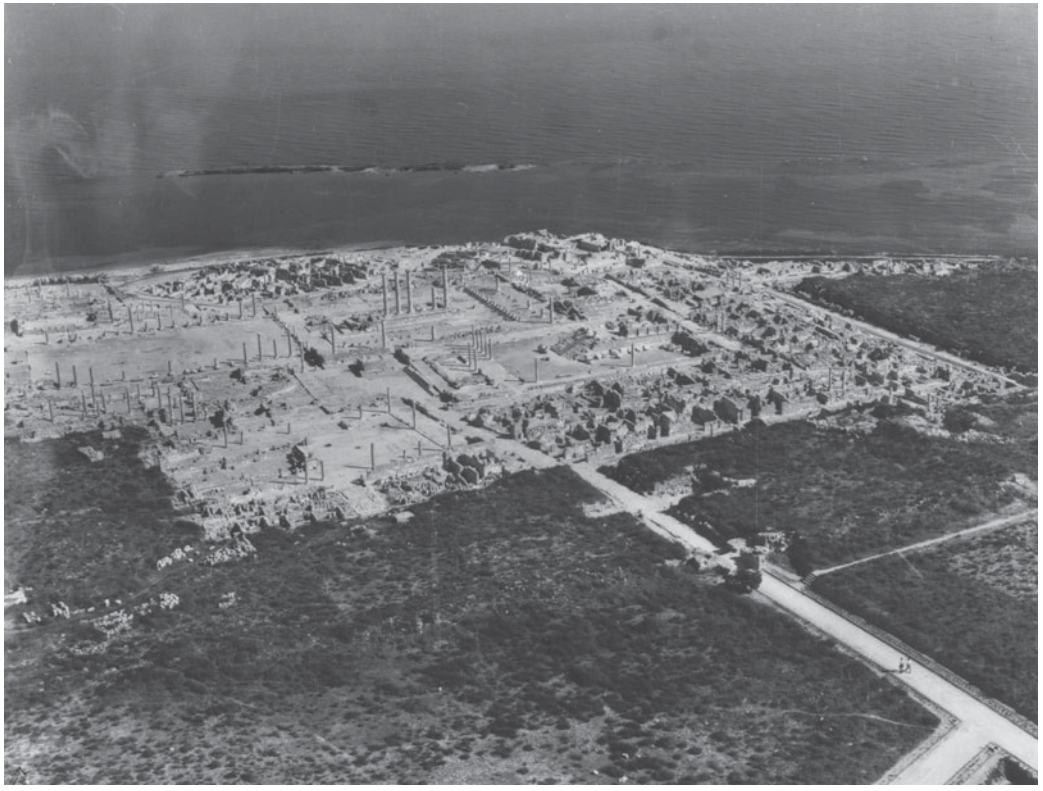
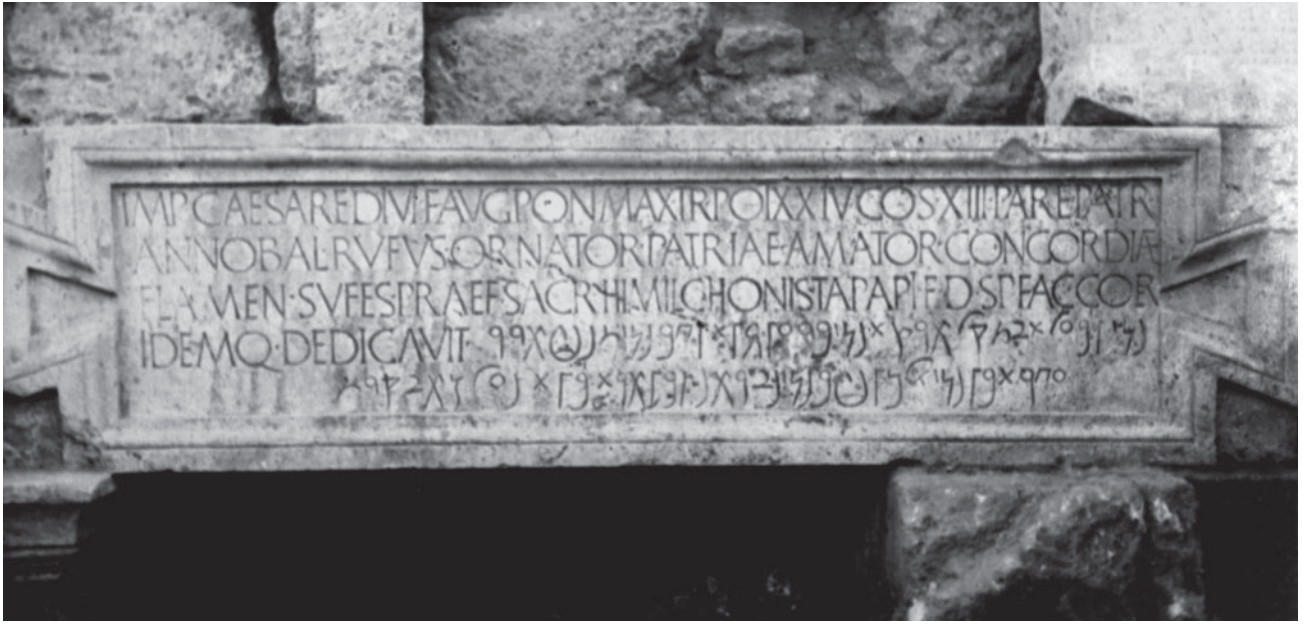


1. Sabratha. Centre of city with basilica and Antonine temple to left and right and forum beyond. *Source*: P.M. Kenrick.

2. Sabratha. Forum area from west, with forum and basilica in centre. *Source*: P.M. Kenrick.

3. Sabratha. Basilica (and later church) from south-west. *Source*: P.M. Kenrick.



4. Lepcis Magna. Bilingual Latin and Neo-Punic inscription, IRT 323. *Source*: DAI 41.412.

5. Zliten. Fish scene detail from seasons mosaic, Villa of Dar Buc Ammera. *Source*: Assaraya Al-Hamra / Jamahiriya Museum. Tripoli.

6. Lepcis Magna. Seascape and fishermen, Villa of the Nile mosaic.
Source: Assaraya Al-Hamra / Jamahiriya Museum, Tripoli.

7. Rome. Statue of Isis with roses. Vatican Museums. *Source*: DAI 1933.0720.

8. Ostia. Mill scene with ass. Vatican Museums. *Source*: DAI 80.1395.

9. Kasserine, Tunisia. Cillium monument. *Source*: DAI 66.807.

10. Carthage. Dominus Julius mosaic. *Source*: Bardo National Museum.

11. Pompeii. Reproduction of detail from the Villa of the Mysteries.
Source: Creative Commons.

12. Pompeii. Mosaic from the House of the Menander showing bath-worker. From *The Image of the Black in Western Art I*.

13. Athens. Terracotta lamp of squatting African boy.
From *The Image of the Black in Western Art I.*

14. Tarraco. Bronze statuette of African boy.
From *The Image of the Black in Western Art I.*

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NOTES

1 Law, Magic, and Culture in Apuleius's Apology

1 The date of the trial depends on the date of Claudius Maximus's proconsulate, which was almost certainly in 158/9; see Guey 1951; Syme 1959; Thomasson 1996: 63; cf. Syme 1965; Barnes 1971: 271. Amarelli 1988: 129 maintains an older date of 160, and Fick 1991: 4 a date of 161. Guey 1951 suggests that the trial took place in the winter of 158/9 (cf. Hunink 1997: I 12), Birley 1987: 263 the autumn of 158. Strabo 3.4.20 has governors of the Spanish imperial provinces administering justice at New Carthage and Tarraco during the winter, and conducting assize tours during the summer, which supports the idea of a date for the trial in the spring of 159. But given that the proconsular year probably began and ended in April, if Claudius Maximus travelled through his province to hear cases immediately after arriving in Carthage, the principal city of Africa Proconsularis, and returned there in September, as suggested by later evidence (Lane Fox 1987: 487), the trial could be placed between April and September 158. For expressions of the view that Apuleius was acquitted, see the summary in Hijmans 1994: 1714–15; cf. Graf 1994: 79; Zanker 1995: 234; Hunink 1997: I 19–20.

2 For an earlier important demonstration of the historical value of the *Apology*, see Pavis d'Escurac 1974. Contrast Hunink 2008: 86 n. 31, cautioning against taking the *Apology* 'too seriously as a historical document.'

3 For the archaeology of Sabratha, see Kenrick 1986 and Joly 1998; cf. Mattingly 1995: 125–7; and for its prosperity in the era of Antoninus Pius, marked by municipal building with the use especially of Pentelic and Proconnesian marbles, see Duncan-Jones 1990: 63–7; Joly 1998: 136–7; Pensabene 2001. See Supplement of Images, nos. 1–3. Almost anonymous: note Ward-Perkins 1981: 380 on the theatre of Sabratha: 'not in any way unusual.' Population: I estimate

from the rough calculation of 28,000+ for the population of Oea in the second half of the second century given by Duncan-Jones 1974: 273, assuming that the towns were of roughly comparable size; Oea may in fact have been the bigger of the two; see Mattingly 1995: 122. Colosseum: see Richardson 1992: 10: 'no more than 45,000 spectators could be accommodated by the Colosseum' (cf. Richardson 1992: 87: the Circus Maximus could accommodate perhaps 250,000). Duncan-Jones 1974: 266 refers to Oea, and by implication to Sabratha and Lepcis, as 'a major city,' but this is only relatively true; cf. Kenrick 1985: 11: 'this never great, but certainly once prosperous, town' (of Sabratha). Note the description of Tripolitania given by Cary 1949: 220: 'half-isolated from the world around.' Concordant union: see Kleiner 1992: 344–55, with references.

4 On the Roman assize system, see Burton 1975, with the remark that there 'should be little doubt that Sabratha was a judicial centre for all or part of Tripolitania' (96); and on Africa in particular, Lepelley 1994; cf. the description of procedures before the prefect of Egypt given by Lewis 1983: 189–94. Prestige: for the benefits brought by serving as an assize centre, see Swain 1996 with Dio Chrys. *Orat*. 35.15–17. Basilica and tribunal: see Kenrick 1986: 68–80. Apuleius refers to the tribunal at *Apol*. 85.2 and 99.1 (cf. 52.3). On the architectural significance of the apse, see generally Wallace-Hadrill 1994: 23: 'The apse with its semicupola serves to frame the visual centerpiece of certain types of public room … notably the tribunal of a basilica.' Required: Quint. *Inst*. 11.3.134. Communicated: David 1983. Hunink 1997: II 158 has Apuleius's trial taking place 'at the old law courts in the Forum.'

5 *enimuero proconsul ipse moderata uoce rarenter et sedens loquitur et plerumque de tabella legit; quippe praeconis uox garrula ministerium est, proconsulis autem tabella sententia est, quae semel lecta neque augeri littera una neque autem minui potest, sed utcumque recitata est, ita prouinciae instrumento refertur*. For Roman private law in the *Apology*, see Norden 1912. Allusions: cf. Norden 1912: 132, 126–7, 114, 138, and Amarelli 1988: 136–44. L. Aemilius Frontinus, Q. Sicinius Clarus Pontianus: Guey 1954; Corbier 1982: 694, 727–8. Reality: cf. Apul. *Met*. 3.2: *Iamque sublimo suggestu magistratibus residentibus, iam praecone publico silentium clamante …*; 3.11: *Ecce ilico etiam ipsi magistratus cum suis insignibus …*

6 See *Apol*. 1–2. Tannonius Pudens is first introduced at *Apol*. 4.2. On Oea, see Mattingly 1995: 122–5 and cf. above n. 3.

7 On the powers and responsibilities of the proconsul, see *Dig*. 1.16; 1.18 with Sherwin-White 1963: 1–23 and Kolendo 1982. King: Sen. *Ira* 2.5.5; God-like: Lactant. *Inst*. 2.16.7. The emperor Galba was remembered for the commendably strict exercise of justice as proconsul of Africa, even in small matters, taking firm action against a soldier's petty profiteering and finding a common-sense solution to a dispute over the ownership of livestock (Suet. *Galba* 7.2). But the

later proconsul Marius Priscus was a flagrant criminal who extorted great sums of money from provincials, including an episode at Lepcis in Tripolitania, and held on his staff subordinates who arranged murderous atrocities in return for cash; he was subsequently punished (Plin. *Ep*. 2.11–12). Galba himself in Spain under Nero handed down brutally cruel sentences, nailing the severed hands for instance of a dishonest moneylender to his table (Suet. *Galba* 9.1); see MacMullen 1990: 205–6 for other instances of 'judicial savagery' by provincial governors. P. Antius Orestes: Oliver 1966; Harris 1992. Wife: Claudius Maximus's wife was named Secunda; see Raepsaet-Charlier 1987: no. 691; but his legates and quaestor (cf. Dio 53.14.7 with Thomasson 1996: 13–14) have not yet been identified. Dangerous roads: Epict. 4.1.91. Preparations: see the detailed list of materials required of local individuals in the mid-second century for the visit of the prefect of Egypt in *P. Lond.* I 159; cf. Mitchell 1976: 127–8; 1993: 1.64–7. For the Republican background, Millar 1977: 28–31. Observe the reference to requisition at Apul. *Met*. 9.39. Advantage: Saller 1982: 151–2. A flood of cases might be expected: Plut. *Mor*. 501e–f.

8 Border disputes: Tac. *Hist*. 4.50. On olive production and other economic factors in Tripolitania, see Mattingly 1985; 1988; 1995: 138–59. On Pudentilla, see Fick 1992; Gutsfeld 1992: 252–6 (on the economic profile especially); Fantham 1995; Hunink 1998.

9 For the Roman law on magic, see the still useful survey in Pharr 1932; cf. Garnsey 1970: 109–11; Dickie 2001: 142–61. On the absence of a comprehensive legal ban, see Phillips 1991. Observe, however, the letter (*P. Yale inv.* 299) of a late second-century prefect of Egypt sent to district governors with instructions to suppress divination; Parássoglou 1976 with Rea 1977. Magicians: MacMullen 1966a: 95–127; Dickie 2001: 162–201. Exile: *Dig*. 48.8.3, the penalty of deportation for *honestiores* under the *Lex Cornelia de sicariis et ueneficiis*, the law under which Apuleius is commonly but I think erroneously thought to have been accused; see the Postscript below; cf. *Apol*. 26.9, 100.9 for the capital nature of the charges, with August. *De ciu. D.* 8.19: mention of the death penalty. For the seriousness of the threat to Apuleius, cf. Barnes 1971: 212; Amarelli 1988: 135.

10 On this charge generally, see Abt 1908: 135–231; Norden 1912: 37–8; Graf 1994: 87–92. Preposterous: note Hijmans 1994: 1764 on *Apol*. 29: 'The passage oozes scorn.' For the denial of association, see *Apol*. 31.1: *enimuero piscis ad quam rem facit captus nisi ad epulas coctus? Ceterum ad magian nihil quicquam uidetur mihi adiutare*; 32.1: *Dixi cur non arbitrer quicquam negotii esse magis et piscibus*.

11 Wünsch 1912: no. 5, excerpted from the translation of Gager 1992: no. 36; cf. Dickie 2000: 574. On binding spells (*defixiones*), see generally Graf 1994: 139–98. Galen: 708–38K (Powell 2003: 135–47).

12 Finger-ring charms: see from Roman Britain, for example, *RIB* 2422.2, 12, 19, 35, 47, 48 (and cf. 2421.1; 2440.15, 16). Amulets: Kotansky 1991a; see the collections of Bonner 1950 and Kotansky 1994; cf. Bonner 1946. Ubiquity: MacMullen 1966a: 100–8; Fowler 1995; Dickie 2001; cf. Gordon 1987; MacMullen 1981: 70–1, arguing for an increase in 'superstition' in the imperial period (a difficult argument, however; see Rutherford 1989: 181–8, and my remarks in the Preface). Belief: Philost. *VA* 7.39, with Evans-Pritchard 1976: 154–8 on explanations among the Azande for contradictions in oracles with no damage to sustained belief in their efficacy. Dividing line: *Apol*. 40.3; cf. 43.8. On Apuleius's medical knowledge, see Gaide 1991. Erotic purposes: Plin. *HN* 28.88, 106. Women: Dickie 2000: 577.

13 False: cf. Abt 1908: 141–4, with specific reference to love magic; disputed by Tupet 1976: 67–8, on the argument that love-philtres are the subject of discussion. I take Apuleius to say in *Apol*. 31 that (1) there is no association between fish and magic in general and (2) there is therefore no connection between fish and love magic in particular. In addition to *Apol*. 32.1 (quoted in n. 10, above) see also 42.2: *Scierunt et ipsi argumentum piscarium futile et nihil futurum, praeterea nouitatem eius ridiculam, (quis enim fando audiuit ad magica maleficia disquamari et exdorsari piscis solere?), potius aliquid de rebus peruulgatioribus et iam creditis fingendum esse*. Pliny: for the background, see Beagon 1992: 102–13. Helios: *PGM* III 515–20 (Betz 1992: 32). Sun: *PDM* xiv 875–85 (Betz 1992: 240); see also *PGM* I 104; I 291; IV 2685–94; *PDM* xiv 330; *PGM* CXXVII 1–2 (respectively Betz 1992: 6, 10, 83, 214, 322).

14 *PDM* xiv 335–49 (Betz 1992: 215); cf. *PDM* xiv 355–65 (Betz 1992: 216). *Remora*: cf. also Arist. *HA* 2.14.505b; Ovid, *Hal*. 99; Lucan 6.674–5; Isid. *Orig*. 12.6.34; according to Plin. *HN* 32.139, it could also act as an antaphrodisiac. Procedure: *PGM* XXXVI 283–94 (Betz 1992: 276). Note the comment of Nock 1972: 2.905 (originally in *Gnomon* 29 [1957] 531–2): 'The fish was also notable as living in the element on which man depended but in which he could not live … , and its power of multiplying, coupled perhaps with its shape, could easily contribute to its being associated with human fecundity; it was a natural amuletic type.' On sacred fish, especially in the worship of Atargatis, see MacMullen 1981: 35 with 160 n. 5; Lightfoot 2003: 65–72. Nelson 2001 quotes Cyranides 4.62.8–10: 'If one were to cut the chin of a red mullet which is still living, and release it [the fish] alive into the ocean to depart, and then offer [the chin] to a woman in a drink, it brings on great sexual desire, harmony of feeling, and love.'

15 *PGM* IV 2441–56 (Betz 1992: 82–3: 'Pachrates, the prophet of Heliopolis, revealed it to the emperor Hadrian, revealing the power of his own divine magic. For it attracted in one hour; it made someone sick in 2 hours; it destroyed in 7 hours, sent the emperor himself dreams, as he thoroughly tested the whole

truth of the magic within his power. And marveling at the prophet, he ordered double fees to be given to him.' Nock 1972: 2.183–4 (originally in *Gnomon* 4 [1928] 224–5) was sceptical of the story, which 'developed from the probably historical account of Hadrian's meeting with a prophet or poet called Pancrates.' It is taken more seriously by MacMullen 1966a: 101, who accepts the identification of Pachrates with Lucian's Pancrates, and by Anderson 1994: 157–8 (cf. 172); see especially Birley 1997: 244–5. *P. Oxy.* 1085 identifies Pancrates of Alexandria, who wrote a poem on Hadrian and Antinous (see Syme 1991: 164). Christian magic: e.g., August. *De ciu. D.* 18.23. Sorcerer: Acts of the Apostles 13.6–7.

16 Those who listened: *Apol*. 28.3; cf. 46.1. Mosaic decorations: Dunbabin 1978: 126, 162–4; cf. Dunbabin and Dickie 1983. Quotation: Dunbabin 1978: 162. On the erect phallus as a device to give protection against the Evil Eye (cf. Plin. *HN* 28.39: *medicus inuidiae*), see Johns 1982: 61–75. For African inscriptions warding off the Evil Eye, see Merlin 1940; Ghalia 1990. On fish mosaics, see Toynbee 1973: 212–15; Aurigemma 1960: pls. 126, 128, 134, 135 (Zliten, see Supplement no. 5; cf. also pls. 137, 138, 139, 140: gladiator mosaic with fish); Meyboom 1977.

17 Suggested: Dunbabin 1978: 162. Reliefs: Mattingly 1987: 75; cf. 1995: 162. Workshop: from a necropolis near El Djem: see Foucher 2000.

18 For a list of authors cited by Apuleius, see Helm 1994: 115.

19 Assumption: whether the *Apology* as it now exists is the version Apuleius delivered at his trial or a subsequent elaboration cannot be positively known. Abt 1908: 6–8 argued for a substantial elaboration (cf. Amarelli 1988: 114–15), but Vallette 1971 (first published in 1924): xxiv, xxv, took the view that the extant version, whether worked up from notes or from the version of a stenographer, was not radically different from the court speech: 'En somme le discours écrit ne saurait différer sensiblement du discours oral' (xxiv). This seems to me a reasonable view. A circumstantial case can be made that the extant version is in fact the original speech; see Winter 1969, pointing to the likelihood that Apuleius's speech on Aesculapius given at Oea (*Apol*. 55.10–11) was published from a stenographed version, and to Apuleius's statement at *Flor*. 9.13 that his later speeches were recorded as he delivered them and could not therefore be altered: *nam quodcumque ad uos protuli, exceptum ilico et lectum est, nec reuocare illud nec autem mutare nec emendare mihi inde quicquam licet*. Quintilian (*Inst*. 7.2.24) shows that stenographers published written versions of speeches unilaterally, without their authors' permission, while the habitual presence of *notarii* at investigations conducted by Roman magistrates is reflected in records of Christian martyrdoms; see Bowersock 1995: 36–8. For the introduction of stenography, see Plut. *Cato min*. 23.3. All in all, it seems to me that the written version cannot be substantially different from the original; cf. Hijmans 1994: 1715–19 (Gaide 1993: 231 dismisses the evidence of *Flor*. 9.13 as

'une plaisanterie et une exagération' and asserts that the *Apology* was largely written at Carthage long after the trial; Hunink 2000b thinks the text should be changed and cannot provide evidence of stenographers at all). On the textual tradition of the *Apology*, which derives from a late-fourth-century *emendatio* made by Sallustius, see Vallette 1971: xxxi–xxxvii; Reynolds 1983: 15–16; cf. Gaisser 2008: passim. Observe Augustine's awareness of the speech: *Ep*. 138; *De ciu. D.* 8.19. Standard definition: Anderson 1993: 8. For Apuleius as a sophist, see Barnes 1971: 212–13; Harrison 2000, and, much earlier, Helm 1955. The difficulties scholars have in defining the Second Sophistic (Anderson 1990: 2005: 4–22; Whitmarsh 2005: 3–22) are less symptoms in my view of its elusiveness or complexity than indications of whether it was a cultural phenomenon of any significance at all; Brunt 1994 is sceptical of its existence. *Doctrina: Apol*. 48.12; 91.3 (of Claudius Maximus); observe the way Apuleius contrasts Greek and Latin populations: *apud Graecos … apud nos* (*Apol*. 9.6–8); cf. *De deo Socr*. 150: *nostra lingua*. Aulus Gellius: Holford-Strevens 1988. Suetonius: Wallace-Hadrill 1983. On Apuleius's knowledge of philosophers, see Hijmans 1987: 416–17; and on his interest in archaic poets, Mattiaci 1986; Pasetti 2007.

20 Sicinius Aemilianus: *Apol*. 10.6; 16.7; 22.3; 23.6; 36.7; 66.3–8; 91.1. Sicinius Pudens: *Apol*. 98.8: *loquitur numquam nisi Punice et si quid adhuc a matre graecissat; enim Latine loqui neque uult neque potest*; cf. 28.9. For discussion of knowledge of Greek among the elite of Roman North Africa, see Fick 1987b and further references in chap. 8.

21 Invective: the rhetorical strategy of Apuleius is analysed in McCreight 1990. Whether the idiom of presenting lists of examples was as pronounced in the speech's original form as it now seems (Rives 2008), it is difficult to tell. On taking evidence in criminal trials, see *Dig*. 22.5, not to be ignored in discussions of Apuleius's tactics. On unreliable witnesses, note Suet. *Galba* 7.2.

22 Under these circumstances, it is unlikely that Apuleius's display of literary learning in the *Apology* was intended to illustrate to a broad audience the prevalence and acceptance of magical practices in contemporary society (Faraone 1999: 38). Septimius Severus: *Epit. de Caes.* 20.8; Octavilla: *HA Sev.* 15.7. Stiddin: *IRT* 236; Iddibal: *IRT* 300; Apuleus Maxssimus: *CIL* VIII 22758; Ulpius Chinitiu: *IRT* 859. On Tripolitanian languages and their cultural import, see Millar 1968; Mattingly 1987: 73–81; Harris 1989: 175–80; Adams 1994; Mattingly 1995: 162–8; cf. also Whittaker 1978; MacMullen 1966b; Matthews 1989. Transcribed: Amadasi Guzzo 1988. Madauros: not mentioned in the *Apology*, but for the *testimonia* revealing the birthplace, see Butler and Owen 1914: vii; Vallette 1971: vi–vii; *PIR*^{2} A 958. Athens: on its attractiveness to the western elite, see Alcock 1993: 16–7, 224–7.

23 Rutherford 1989: 101, with reference to M. Aur. *Med*. 1.15 (cf. 1.16.10 and *HA Marcus* 3.2). Most grateful: M. Aur. *Med*. 1.17.5. On Maximus's career and the

identification of the public functionary with the Maximus of the *Meditations*, see Syme 1965; cf. Syme 1971a: 237: 'This senator illustrates the quality, tastes and training of the governing class, the stamp of man to whom emperors were not sorry to consign the government of armed provinces'; and on Stoic identity, Syme 1983: 34–5.

24 I apply the idea of learning as a distinctive code to the relationship between Apuleius and Claudius Maximus from the analysis of Brown 1992: 35–70; see *Apol*. 12.1 for the notion of knowledge as a preserve of the intellectually elite. For the metaphor of the family of Plato, see Hijmans 1987: 416. On Claudius Maximus see also *Apol*. 25.11 (Plato quoted directly to him), 38.1, 41.4, 48.5 (*sollertia*), 81.2. It has often been noted that Apuleius appeals to Maximus directly (e.g., Fick 1987b: 292, noting that Apuleius uses Greek in his speech to create 'une sorte de complicité' between Maximus and himself), but the intellectual motivation behind the rhetorical strategy has not, I think, been sufficiently placed within the socio-cultural context of the trial; compare Callebat 1984: 144 on the linguistic complexity of second-century North Africa and the educated style of Apuleius's Latin with the apposite remarks of MacMullen 1990: 216. Isolated: contrast the cultural atmosphere of Carthage as sketched by Barnes 1971: 194–5; cf. Philost. *VA* 5.8 on the theme of cultural isolation: while the inhabitants of Gades knew of the Olympic festival, their neighbours in smaller communities did not. Quintilian: *Inst*. 4.1.16; 4.1.57; 4.2.19 (cf. 4.3.12–17); 9.3.101; 10.7.1–2; 11.3.134.

25 See Aurigemma 1960: 47 (quoted) with plates 94–7; Dunbabin 1978: pl. 124; Blanchard-Lemée, Ennaïfer, Slim, and Slim 1996: fig. 181 (cf. 128). See Supplement no. 6. Mention of the fish hook, of which there is a notable example in the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto, gives a reminder of the ubiquitous presence in Roman antiquity of the blacksmith. Fish and fishing scenes in Tunisian mosaics are well illustrated in Ben Abed-Ben Khaler, Balanda and Echeverría 2003: figs. 317, 322, 325, 326, 328, 330, 350, 352, 353–6, 397, 404–5, 420. On fishing techniques, see Bekker-Nielsen 2002b.

26 Dress: Edmondson 2008. On beards and their symbolic significance, see Cic. *Cael*. 33, with Austin 1960: 91–2, and Ovid, *AA* 505–24, with Hollis 1977: 117–20; cf. Wyke 1994: 135. On the widespread adoption of beards by Roman men in the second century, see Zanker 1995: 198–266. Quintilian: see also *Inst*. 11.148 on the emotional appeal of the orator's dishevelled hair. See further chap. 8.

27 Introspective philosopher: see Pollitt 1986: 68–9; Smith 1993; MacMullen 1966a: 109–11, on the more visionary image of the philosopher that was emerging at the time of Apuleius's trial (see esp. MacMullen 1966a: 321 n. 17 for iconographic references), and Zanker 1995: 233–42, for the second-century associations of beards with ascetic philosophy (for Zanker [1995: 235], Apuleius's physical appearance in court was a 'masquerade'). The beard and long hair

were also signs of mourning, and deployed as such by orators; see Kaufman 1932. On the association between long hair and magic, see Leach 1958; Mageo 1994. Apollonius: Philost. *VA* 7.8; 7.20; 7.31–2; 7.34; 8.4; 8.7 (cf. Dzielska 1986); for charges of magic brought against various sophists, see Bowersock 1969: 116; Holford-Strevens 1988: 74. Distinction: cf. Fick 1991: 19. Euphrates: see Sherwin-White 1966: 108–9, and note Epict. 4.8.17; cf. Zanker 1995: 260–2 on his 'hieratic appearance.' Observe Apul. *Met*. 11.8 for the stereotype of the philosopher, and cf. Epict. 4.8.15; Quint. *Inst*. 12.3.12. On the conventionality of Greek philosophers advising Roman dynasts and emperors, see Rawson 1989.

28 Intruder: see further chap. 3.

29 Hunink: 2008: 86 n. 32; cf. earlier Gaide 1993 (cf. above n. 19). Ovid: observe Green 2005: x: 'This flight from reality may be, in essence, a recourse for those scholars of this age who, having systematically removed literature further and further from contact with the real world, found the poet's Black Sea banishment, with his agonized reaction to it, an intrusive and ongoing embarrassment, best relegated to the safe toyshop of fantasy.' For a sensible view of the historical significance of Ovid's exile poetry, see Millar 1993.

30 Wilson 1999, 2002.

31 Assumed: e.g., Zimmerman 2008: 135; Hunink 2008: 85, with reference to 'the most erudite members of the audience'; cf. Riess 2008: 58, 59, 63 ('all educated people present at the trial'), 69. Syrian and Aramaean elements: Lassère 1977: 398–402, 405–7; Manfredi 1993. On the economic importance of fishing in Roman antiquity, see Bekker-Nielsen 2002a.

32 Q. Lollius Urbicus: a man of some eminence, in origin a Numidian and the son of a Grania; Apuleius's presence in Sabratha was due to his defence of Pudentilla in a legal case brought against her by certain Granii (*Apol*. 1; see the Appendix). The details are important (contrast Hunink 1997 I 18, II 17 [cf. Hunink 2000a: 88]). Sardinia: *ILS* 5947, from the year 69; cf. Dio 53.14.5–7.

33 Discretion: see the collection of documents in Musurillo 1972. Apuleius's trial was an example of the process scholars formally term *cognitio extra ordinem*. This was recognized by Sherwin-White (1963: 48) in his discussion of the trials of Jesus and St Paul, and, as he acknowledged, much earlier by no less a figure than Mommsen (cf. Rives 2006: 60); cf. Harries 2007: 28–42. The three elements of the procedure were, as Sherwin-White stated: 'the free formulation of charges and penalties, summed up in the lawyer's phrase *arbitrium iudicantis*'; 'the insistence on a proper formal act of accusation by the interested party'; and the hearing of a case 'by the holder of *imperium* in person on his tribunal, and assisted by his advisory cabinet or *consilium* of friends and officials' (1963: 17). The early sections of the *Apology* on procedure are consistent with these criteria. The essence of the process was flexibility and the exercise of discretion by the presiding judge, so that it was unnecessary for charges to be laid against a

potential defendant under the terms of a statute. As remarked in n. 9, it is often thought that Apuleius was charged under the Sullan *Lex Cornelia de sicariis et ueneficiis* (cf. Mattiaci 1996: 41; Amarelli and Lucrezi 1997; Hunink 1997: I 13). This is both unlikely and unnecessary: it was enough for allegations to be made of magical practice and consequent disruption of public order; their capital import was clear; cf. Harries 2007: 123–31. The procedure was comparable to that in the trials of Jesus before Pilate, as recorded in the synoptic Gospels, and the trials of St Paul before Felix and Festus as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. In principle the fictional trial of Paul at Iconium before Castellius in the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* proceeds in the same way. Perceptions: for the possibilities, Rives 2002; 2003.

34 Game-like: the assumption of many of the contributions to Riess ed. 2008, where queries should arise about the realities of Roman life in relation to critical appreciation. To believe that the *Apology* was meant to launch Apuleius on a sophistic career (Harrison 2008) is to move far in my view from the real situation in which the speech had its being, and involves not least issues of authorial intent. Quintilian's evidence is enough to validate Apuleius on the abruptness with which the case against him was made (contrast Hunink 1997: II 12). Gold charm: Kotansky 1991b, a *lamella* from the fourth century now in Baltimore; for the background of binding-spells as a recourse for help in legal cases, see Gager 1992: 116–24.

2 Contending with Conversion

1 Original: Walsh 1970: 148. On the relationship of the *Metamorphoses* to other versions of the story of a man changed into an ass, see Mason 1994; cf. chap. 12 n. 3 on *P. Oxy.* 4762: the degree of creativity and literary independence remains unknown. Autobiographical: Festugière 1954: 76–7; Griffiths 1975: 3–7 (essentially confirmed by van der Paardt 1981); Beaujeu 1983: 392–6; Stok 1985: 364–7; Callebat 1998: 29. Simplistic: Winkler 1985: 21, 206, 277; cf. Fick 1987a: 50.

2 Lucius's experience: not comparable, however, to contemporary Christian conversion in the view of Nock 1933: 134–5, 267, despite Gallagher 1990: 125–6. Nock quotation: Nock 1933: 138. Winkler quotation: Winkler 1985: 179; cf. 127, 140–1, 166, 276. See similarly Griffiths 1975: 3, 163; Schlam 1992: 9; Goodman 1994: 22; Fantham 1996: 254; Witte 1997: 41, 57; van Mal-Maeder 1997. Conversion narrative: cf. earlier but briefly, Festugière 1954: 68–84. Shumate quotation: Shumate 1996: 15.

3 Religious sentiment: but see Schlam 1992: 9, 115, 122, sensibly remarking that the religious element in the *Metamorphoses* should not be allowed to obscure its essential character as a 'narrative entertainment.' Monotheistic culture: James made occasional use of material from other major world religions

(e.g., Islam), but despite a few passing allusions to classical antiquity never fully dealt with polytheistic societies. Witte (1997: 57) conceives of 'pagan and … Christian notions of conversion and initiation' without differentiation; similarly, van Mal-Maeder (1997: 105–6) speaks of 'religious convictions and true faith' in reference to Lucius's 'conversion' without asking if such concepts are relevant to Greco-Roman religion. Issue: note Nock 1933: 160: 'Our way of thinking is throughout coloured by the nature of Christianity.' Quotations: James 1985: 189, 196.

4 Nock quotation: Nock 1933: 7; cf. 28, 'a rejection of one's old life and the entering on a new life'; 134: 'Conversion implies turning from something to something else: you put earlier loyalties behind you.' Contemporary definition: Gallagher 1991: 15. Perceptions of conversion can in fact be much more complex; see Gallagher 1990 for a survey of meanings (148: 'an individual experience, a social process, the activity of God in the world, or a process of historical change'), none of which, however, considers conversion within a polytheistic culture.

5 Rival systems: North 1992 suggests a rise of religious competitiveness in the Roman imperial period which compelled individuals increasingly to make religious choices; but no attendant threat to polytheism is implied except in cases of monotheistic choice. Pantheon: Wardman 1982; cf. Goodman 1994: 17 on *collegia*. Auden formally became Christian in 1940, returning to the faith he had earlier rejected after a long period in the late thirties of reflection and contemplation; see Kirsch 2005: 1–38. Auden quotation: Auden 1989: 74–5.

6 Not impossible: see Nock 1933: 164–86, 254–71, on conversions to philosophy and Christianity, and Goodman 1994 on conversions to Judaism. Argument: MacMullen 1984; cf. 1985–6: 74–5, where MacMullen charges Nock with inconsistency because he denied conversion in his book but allowed for Christian conversion in his paper 'Paul and the Magus' (Nock 1972: 308–30, first published in 1933); the charge is difficult to understand (cf. Nock 1933: 254). Controversial: see Babcock 1985–6; Jordan 1985–6. For an explanation of early Christian conversions based on the role of interpersonal relationships as observed in modern experience, see Stark 1996. Sinultaneously: see Plin. *Ep*. 10.96 for the classic illustration of Christianity's incompatibility with traditional forms of religiosity (cf. Schmidt 1997: 59), and note Goodman 1994: 32: 'No pagan seriously dreamed of bringing all humankind to give worship in one body to one deity.' Severus Alexander: *HA Alex*. 29.2, on which see Syme 1968: 138. Christian intolerance: see above all Ste. Croix 2006: 133 (from a paper originally published in 1963).

7 Literal credibility: Augustine (*De ciu. D*. 18.18) apparently had some doubts. Definitive study: Millar 1981; cf. Amat 1972: 118, correctly describing Apuleius as '1'observateur de la vie quotidienne'; cf. Reardon 1991: 44 (the *Metamorphoses*

is 'a tableau of provincial life in the Roman Empire at its apogee'); Kenney 1998: xviii–xix. All types: Winkler is sensitive to the 'historical context' in which the *Metamorphoses* was written, but the claim to present 'some items that have not been discussed in relation to Apuleius' (1985: 251) needs to be set against Nock 1933. The view, however, that 'in a precise sense location in a particular culture is *not* a prerequisite' for understanding the 'essential qualities' of the *Metamorphoses* (Winkler 1985: 13) seems contradictory, and the idea that to place an author in the cultural milieu in which he wrote is a necessary barrier to appreciating originality (ibid.: 229–30) is problematical. To neglect context seems to me to result often in critical definitions of 'essential qualities' that are based chiefly on subjective assumptions, so that any individual 'reading' becomes as valid as any other. I recognize that my views run against the grain of much contemporary Apuleian criticism. Greek romance: but contemporary values may still be reflected in the romances: Reardon 1991: 13, 28.

8 Exception: Schlam 1992: 8: 'Christianity apparently is referred to only once, and with hostile mockery' (cf. Kotula 1992: 156 on the absurdity of monotheism); Simon 1974: 302–5, maintaining that *Met*. 9.14 was influenced by Apuleius's knowledge of a passage from Paul; and Baldwin 1984, looking to the influence of Pliny and Tacitus. The most exhaustive study of the passage on the miller's wife is Schmidt 1997, who draws on vocabulary from confrontations between pagans and Christians to make the case for Christian identification. Reference to the eucharist is similarly argued in Schmidt 2003. In both cases, Apuleius's attitude is said not to be hostile: he does not take the new religion seriously. Hunink 2000a finds Christian allusion in *Flor*. 1. Both scholars raise questions of Apuleian intent. The view that Apuleius wrote the *Metamorphoses* as a response to emergent Christianity (Walsh 1968) is extreme.

9 Case histories: James 1985: 189–258. Quotations: James 1985: 189–90, 202, 213–14. See Proudfoot 1985: 102–7, for an analysis of Stephen Bradley's conversion that stresses the inevitability of interpreting experience in predetermined terms, with the remark especially that Bradley 'did not consider explanations involving Krishna, Zeus, or the Qur'an' (104).

10 Claim: Shumate 1996: 321; see similarly Griffiths 1975: 163–4, 167 (though recognizing the difficulties); Rives 1995: 364. Critical progress: many of the observations made by Shumate 1996 on *Met*. 1–10 are important, no matter whether the theoretical framework derived from James is sustainable or not.

11 Unaware: Shumate (1996: 311) assumes that the presence is known to be Isis from the outset; cf. on the contrary Griffiths 1975: 112, 115; Merkelbach 1995: 268. Full moon: cf. Griffiths 1975: 111–12, 115–16. Diana: she has already made a significant appearance at *Met*. 2.4, an ecphrasis, on which see Leach 1981; Schlam 1984; Slater 1998. Venus: already much in evidence in the story of Cupid and Psyche, *Met*. 4.28–6.24, for which see especially Kenney 1990.

12 Conventional style: Griffiths 1975: 119–20. Applicable: Griffiths 1975: 114–15. Practicality: cf. Nock 1933: 7: '*Soteria* and kindred words carried no theological implications; they applied to deliverance from perils by sea and land and disease and darkness and false opinions, all perils of which men were fully aware.'

13 Venus: if the association of Venus with the sea is a literary and mythological commonplace, it is worthwhile nonetheless to keep in mind artistic representations of Venus, especially those found in North Africa, which Apuleius is likely to have known and which may have influenced the way he wrote; see *Met*. 2.8, 2.17, 4.28, 4.31, and esp. 10.31–2 with Blanchard-Lemée, Ennaïfer, Slim, and Slim 1996: 147–60; cf. Amat 1972: 125. Directly: *Met*. 2.4, *palmaris deae facies* ('likeness of the palm-bearing goddess' [trans. Hanson 1989]) presumably hints at Isis, and *Met*. 2.28, on the Egyptian prophet Zatchlas, broadly alludes to her cult. Different: there is nothing to suggest anything like 'a cosmic struggle between religions for human souls' (Goodman 1994: 6).

14 Exclusive: cf. Nock 1933: 155: 'Lucius is not forbidden to take part in other cults, and formal public observances he would no doubt make, but any other worship must to him appear tame and inferior.' The sentence, especially read in context, is a good illustration of how Nock's views, if basically correct in my opinion, could not escape expression in Christianizing terms; cf. Burkert 1987: 48–51; Beard, North, and Price 1998: 301–2. See on the other hand Griffiths 1975: 163–4, despite the evidence cited. Méthy (1996: 263) avoids the language of exclusivity: Isis demands of Lucius 'obéisance scrupuleuse, dévotion absolue et définitive'; that is all.

15 Serapis: see Griffiths 1975: 189. Symbols: see Griffiths 1975: 196–7, 198–9, 205, 209, 212. Will of the gods: at *Met*. 11.29, it is presumably Isis and Osiris who are meant; cf. Griffiths 1975: 337. Griffiths (1975: 330) notes the distinctive rites of Isis, Osiris, and Serapis (cf. *Met*. 11.28: *germanae religionis* ['this twin faith']) without commenting on the plural references; cf. similarly Merkelbach 1995: 269–303.

16 Religious allegiance: it might be allowed that in devoting himself to Isis, Lucius turns away from the pursuit of magic as a way of approaching the divine (cf. Sandy 1972), but this still has no implication for his view of the pantheon.

17 New knowledge: Nock 1933: 14–16, while denying the possibility of conversion, did allow for what he termed 'adhesion' to a particular cult such as that of Isis. Nilsson (1963: 101) traced what he termed 'the monotheistic idea' as far back as Xenophanes, and showed how a concept of the 'High God' flourished under the Roman Empire; he concluded (115): 'The character of the High God may be summarised as follows. He is enthroned in the high heavens; he is the ruler of the universe and the world through the powers that emanate from him; he sends men their fates, just as the stars do; he is unattainable, not to be reached by man; no offerings, no prayers are made to him. The common people

and even the magicians accepted him, although they debased him, contaminating him with other gods and not discarding subaltern gods.' As pointed out by Kotula 1992: 154, however, Nilsson's notion of the High God is henotheistic, not monotheistic, and the incongruity he felt (e.g., 107, with reference to Maximus of Tyre) over contemporary expressions of the existence of gods other than the High God disappears once the right label is applied. Nilsson found a particularly cogent view of the High God in Apuleius's *De mundo* (109–10), but it does not follow that there was no place in Apuleius's religious world for 'subaltern gods' (110). Méthy (1996) demonstrates from Apuleius's philosophical works and the *Metamorphoses* not only the originality and consistency of his views on 'la divinité suprême,' but also (263–5) how his views presented no challenge to traditional polytheistic ways of thinking. (Critics might object to the implicit identification here of Apuleius with Lucius, but the consistency of thought in the works Méthy shows seems undeniable.) The most apposite statement I know on this issue is that of Kotula 1992: 156: 'L'idée d'un dieu unique restait toujours étrangère à la mentalité païenne, et particulièrement aux croyances populaires. Autrement dit: le paganisme n'a jamais abouti à un monothéisme pur et parfait. Il n'a dépassé l'étape hénothéiste'; cf. MacMullen 1981: 83–8; Lane Fox 1987: 34–6. Versnel (1990: 39–50) analyses the cult of Isis in the Hellenistic age to suggest (36) 'the tragic implications of the henotheistic option: the "one" god gives salvation and liberates humanity from the bonds of worldly or cosmic despots, but the price is the highest imaginable: total surrender to the liberator *alias* the new despot.' Fick (1987a) believes that the Isis book is intended 'à faire apparaître derrière Isis une conception du divin fondamentalement platonicienne' (51), which requires no denial of a polytheistic world.

18 Fundamental difference: cf. Habinek 1990 on the Isis cult at Cenchreae as a ritual affirming the boundaries of a local community, though Lucius also participates in the cult of Isis at Rome. Apparent parallels between Lucius's conversion and the Christian conversion of Paul drawn by Smith (2009) overlook the institutional strength of Isis worship in the second century, especially at Rome, and the differences between polytheistic and monotheistic demands on worshippers.

19 Sabratha: Pesce 1953; Brouquier-Reddé 1992b: 44, 58–63; cf. Mattingly 1995: 127. Residents had in their houses lamps which bore the images of the Egyptian gods: see Joly 1974: 20–36. Observe also the discovery of a statue of Isis in the sanctuary of Serapis at Lepcis Magna (Brouquier-Reddé 1992b: 101–5), and for discussion of the Egyptian cults in Tripolitania in general, see Brouquier-Reddé 1992b: 273–6; Bricault 2001: 78; Bricault, Le Bohec, and Podvin 2004. Gigthis: Pisanu 1989: 230. Tempting: Leglay 1983 (acknowledging Apuleius's wider knowledge of the Mediterranean world); Brouquier-Reddé 1992a: 121 (unequivocally); Bricault, Le Bohec, and Podvin 2004: 233: 'il est tentant de

supposer que c'est dans l'une de ces cités portuaires que l'écrivain de Madaure vit pour la première fois le cortège isiaque qu'il décrira plus tard au livre XI des *Métamorphoses*.' The date of composition of the *Metamorphoses* is obviously relevant to this view; I assume that the work was written after Apuleius's trial (see chap. 11), but Dowden 1994 restates a contrary view. Travelling: Sandy 1997: 1–36 surveys details.

20 Madauros: Gsell and Joly 1922: 35–48; Leglay 1961: 361; see further chap. 7. Numidia: Bricault 2001: 86 (Madauros is notably absent from the distribution maps provided); Laporte 2004: 250–1, taking *Met*. 11 as evidence of Isiac worship there. Isis and Serapis in the legionary camp of Lambaesis, 'already … for some time,' when Mattucius Fuscinus (*cos. suff.* 159?) repaired the gods' shrine towards the end of Pius's reign: *CIL* VIII 2630; Syme 1988: 683; Bricault 2001: 86. New evidence: as in the unexpected case of Mainz: for the discovery of a sanctuary to Isis and the Magna Mater dating from the Flavian period, see Blänsdorf 2010. Carthage: Rives 1995: 212–14; Bricault 2001: 82; Bricault, Le Bohec, and Podvin 2004. Temple: Beschaouch 1991, locating it 'précisement dans l'*insula* delimitée par le *decumanus* II nord et les *kardines* XI at XII est, du côte du théâtre et de la colline de 1'Odéon, face au quartier des "villas" romaines' (330), and dating it to the second half of the second century. Beschaouch speculates that Apuleius may have known the temple when he lived in Carthage after his trial in Sabratha, but whether it was even built when he was a student cannot be known. Athens: Dow 1937; Dunand 1973: 2.4–16; Williams 1985; Walters 1988.

21 Cult centre: Walker 1979: 243–7; cf. Dunand 1973: 2.132–52. Pausanias has little to say about the site he mentions, but does point out that Serapis appeared in Athens under the Ptolemies. Phidias's statue: cf. Beaujeu 2002 [1973]: 334; Hijmans 1987: 429. Altar of Pity: Thompson 1952; Travlos 1971: 458; cf. Griffiths 1975: 246; Fick 1987a: 38.

22 Dionysios: Vidman 1969: no. 16 = Bricault 2005: no. 101/0221; see Clinton 1974: 96–7; Walker 1979: 254. Eleusis: Vidman 1969: nos. 8, 9 = Bricault 2005: nos. 101/0301, 101/0302.

23 Elsewhere: perhaps to Cenchreae (cf. Beaujeu 1983: 393), where there was also a temple of Isis; see Pausanias 2.2.3, and Scranton, Shaw, and Ibrahim 1978: 53–78 for the identification of archaelogical remains (though Rothaus 2000 has doubts). Campus Martius: see Richardson 1992: 211–12; Coarelli 1996. The reference is one of several that suggest Apuleius knew the topography of Rome well (cf. *Met*. 6.8: *metas Murtias*; 9.10: *Tullianum*). Personal relevance: Coarelli (1989) has made the intriguing argument that Apuleius should be identified with the L. Apuleius Maximus known to have inhabited a house in Ostia in the mid-second century situated near a Mithraeum decorated with astrological symbols that recall references to the planets in Apuleius's philosophical works. Language: *reformationis* (*Met*. 3.24, 25), *figuram tuam repente mutatam* (11.6),

reformationis (11.13), *reformauit ad homines* (11.16), *renatus* (11.16), *renatos ad nouae reponere rursus salutis curricula* (11.21).

24 Adapted: Griffiths 1975: 3. Clear: see *Onos* 7, 14, 17, 54, 56. Agent: Griffiths 1975: 159–61, pointing to Egyptian associations; Witte 1997: 54–5.

25 Traditionally: Joret 1892; Mattiacci 2001 draws a connection with the *Peruigilium Veneris*. Observe incidentally that the erotic associations of roses are present in another, and very personal, passage: Apuleius in the *Apology* (9) provocatively recites from his own poetry lines in which roses appear in a homoerotic context.

26 Rosalia: Perdrizet 1900; Toynbee 1971: 62–3. Provision: D'Arms 2000: 136, 137–8. Fourth century: Salzman 1990: 96–9, 112, 129. Soldiers: Fink 1971: 425; Henig 1984: 91. Medicinal: Plin. *HN* 21.12–13. Decoration: Ling 1991: 149–52. Garland makers: Guillaume-Coirier 1995.

27 Representations: Merkelbach 1995: Abb. 6, 89, 97, 141, 149; Malaise 1972b: 291–2; Walters 1988: 26–9. See Supplement no. 7. Narrative: Lucius in this respect resembles, or anticipates, the Charles Ryder of E. Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited* (1945), whose identity as a convert to Roman Catholicism is not apparent as the story opens (though Hooper may provide just a hint in the Prologue), and is not revealed until the last page.

28 Martyrologies: *Polycarp* 17.1; *Martyrs of Lyons* 36; *Fructuosus* 1.4, 4.1, 7.2; *Montanus and Lucius* 2.1, 4.6; *Agape* 2.1; *Euplus* 2.4. Funerary art: Guillaume-Coirier 1995.

3 *Romanitas* and the Roman Family

1 For the text of *De pallio*, see Hunink 2005, who, anticipated by Barnes 1971: 229, detects connections in the work with Apuleius's *Florida*, attributing them to the influence of the Second Sophistic (cf. Barnes 1971: 213). Tertullian and Apuleius share much Latinate *doctrina*, but it is notable that in the *De pallio* Tertullian colours the classical exemplary tradition with items from the Hebrew Bible in a manner that renders him distinct. To force all second-century literature into a sophistic mould may in any case exaggerate the importance of the 'bubble' (Brunt 1994), and mark a step away from historical reality. Brennan 2008 sensibly rejects the view that *De pallio* has no serious purpose. For the date of the work, see Barnes 1971: 54–5. *Romanitas*: Tert. *Pall.* 4.1, to be taken seriously: Edmondson 2008. Architecture: Lachaux 1968: 51–8; Wightman 1980; Humphrey 1986: 296–306; Norman 1988; Bomgardner 1989; Deneauve 1990; Gros 1990: 547–73; Picard and Baillou 1992; Ros 1996a; and below chap. 7; cf. on Tripolitania, Ward-Perkins 1971: 103. *Urbanitas*: cf. Lassère 1977: 439.

2 For references on Apuleius's trial, see chap. 1. Tendentious: because nothing survives from the prosecution's side, any historical reconstruction of the case

built on the *Apology* runs the risk of being distorted; nevertheless, I think it reasonable to assume that the essential facts about Pudentilla and her relatives contained in the speech, together with the assumptions Apuleius makes about family life in recounting them, have to be plausible, if not literally precise in every detail. Male author: cf. Harlow 2007. Much attention: Walcot 1991: 16–20, with a catalogue of classical references to widows; Gutsfeld 1992, on Pudentilla's economic interests and independence; Fantham 1995, on the importance of understanding the events recorded in the *Apology* from Pudentilla's point of view; de Marre 2004, on her education; see also (cautiously) Graf 1997: 65–88.

3 Demographic structure: Parkin 1992; Saller 1994; Bagnall and Frier 1994. Marriage: Treggiari 1991b. Children: see the summary provided by Corbier 1999. Conceptualized: Bradley 1991a; Dixon 1992; Martin 1996; Rawson 1997a. Local variations: Gallivan and Wilkins 1997; George 2005. Roman Britain: see Allason-Jones 2004. Postulated: Ilevbare 1973.

4 Connection: cf. Dixon 1997. Legal forms and practices: Norden 1912; Amarelli 1988. The Romanocentric tendency is particularly marked in Hunink 1998, who is sceptical about recovering anything of the historical Pudentilla from an *Apology* he takes as a literary text largely devoid of historical content. He implies that the inconsistencies of presentation imagined in the speech may not reflect a complex personality or case history. The danger of ignoring the historical background is indicated by the belief (Hunink 1997: II 285) that Roman Africa produced no wine (see Mattingly 1995: 155).

5 For the narrative of events, *Apol*. 72.1, 72.2, 72.2–3, 71.4–7, 68.2 (cf. 85.5, 85.7), 68.4–5, 68.6–69.1, 69.4–5, 73.7, 73.2, 74.2, 74.3, 74.5, 77.1–5, 96.3, 77.6–7, 87.6, 97.9–11, 93.6–94.1–3, 96.3, 96.5–6, 99.7, 1.1, 2.3, 67.1, 74.5, 98.2. Expeditions: Sandy 1997: 1–41 offers a guide; see also chap. 2. Faustinus: known from Apul. *De Plat*. 2.1; *De mundo* pr.

6 *Toga uirilis*: for the significance of the ceremony, see Dolansky 2008. Contribute: Guey 1954: 117–19; Corbier 1982: 727–8; 746 (proposing the mid-second century for the first senatorial Aemilius from Oea [see below, n. 15], and the late second century for the first senatorial Sicinius). Characterize: Fantham 1995: 223; Dixon 1997.

7 Thompson 1969: 150–2. Cicero: see Rebuffat 1986. May have: Thompson 1971: 236–8; Birley 1988a: 3; Gutsfeld 1992: 259 n. 71. *IRT* 485 identifies a Herennius. Untouched: Di Vita 1968a: 8; Thompson 1971: 236; Benabou 1976: 540–1; Mattingly 1995: 52, 59, 160. Native elite: Thompson 1971: 239–42; Benabou 1976: 511–20; Mattingly 1995: 58–9, 160–1. Independent: Lassère 1977: 236, 371–2. Under-urbanized: Mattingly 1995: 60–1.

8 Stock: cf. Thompson 1971: 241 n. 8 (from the evidence of the *Apology* alone); Corbier 1982: 727–8. Frézouls 1989: 164–5 points to the particular survival in

Tripolitanian inscriptions of Libyan names, and the Libyan element should not be forgotten; the number of inscriptions is low, but they must represent a much higher proportion of the population; cf. Masson 1976: 57–9. M. Aemilius Lepidus: Lassère 1977: 201; cf. Bertrandy 1994: 191–2 on Aemilii in the coastal cities of Tripolitania in general (25 attestations). Suggestion: Birley 1988a: 4–5; cf. Benabou 1976: 516 (a Latin name added to an original name). Suffix: Kajanto 1964.

9 Theophoric: Halff 1963–4: 63–83 (esp. 65); Thompson 1969: 150; Benabou 1976: 501–2; Birley 1988a: 2; Ferjaoui 1993: 408–73. Pattern: Birley 1988a: 4–5 (though 'Pudens' is not included in the list of Punic-derived names given by Lassère 1977: 451–4). The name of Apuleius's son Faustinus fits the same pattern (for 'Faustus,' see Lassère 1977: 452). For other Tripolitanian examples of 'Pudens' see *IRT* 117–25 (Flavius Pudens, *flamen* at Sabratha: see n. 16), 240, 295, 647, 729, 732. For other examples of 'Pudentilla,' *IRT* 2 (Mucia Pudentilla), 22, 91 (Anicia Pudentilla). Sicinii: cf. Thompson 1971: 248; Corbier 1982: 728. Rare: Lassère 1977: 84. Patron: see Lassère 1977: 80 for a P. Sicinius at Utica, probably a migrant from Italy, before the end of the Republic. Notion: Birley 1988a: 14–15.

10 Cultural legacy: cf. Cherry 1998, arguing for a very minimalist position on the Romanization of North Africa in general. Intermarriage: Corbier 1982: 694.

11 Oea: Haynes 1955: 101–6; Lézine 1968, suggesting that Oea was a more important city than Sabratha; Jones 1989: 92–4; Mattingly 1995: 122–5; Kenrick 2009: 16–21. Explained: Ward-Perkins 1971: 104–8, though allowing for some Punic ornamental influences; cf. Ward-Perkins 1982. City plan: Haynes 1955: 102 fig. 8; Jones 1989: 93 fig. 1; cf. Mattingly 1995: 122 fig. 6:4; Kenrick 2009: 17. Arch: Aurigemma 1969; Haynes 1955: 103–4; Lézine 1968: 58–9; Kenrick 2009: 19–20. Note that Apuleius refers to a basilica there (*Apol*. 73.2), which must have been typical of its public architecture. Temple: Ward-Perkins 1971: 108–9; Brouquier-Reddé 1992b: 73–9, observing that this is the oldest attestation of the cult of Cybele in Africa, with *IRT* 300. Mausoleum: Di Vita 1968a: 17–31. Heterogeneous: Brouquier-Reddé 1992b; cf. Merighi 1940: II 85–102, and on Phoenician-Punic gods, Ferjaoui 1993: 337–400. Pavis d'Escurac 1974: 100–1 observes that Apuleius says nothing of Oea as the terminus of a caravan route bringing precious commodities from central Africa across the Fezzan and the country of the Garamantes, as a port full of traders, or as a town whose hinterland was heavily devoted to oil production.

12 Votive dish: Rossi and Garbini 1976–7: 7–19; Brouquier-Reddé 1992b: 187–8 (cf. Di Vita 1982: 564); Di Vita-Evrard 2002–3. The cult of Ba'al Hammon in Tripolitania is not abundantly attested, which may be due to the greater popularity, in the coastal cities at least, of Shadrapa and Milk'Ashtart; thus Brogan and Smith 1984: 215. Sanctuary: Brouquier-Reddé 1992b: 27–9; cf.

Di Vita 1982: 562–3. Temple: Brouquier-Reddé 1992b: 88–91, with *IRT* 520; according to Di Vita 1968b, it may have replaced an earlier temple now rebuilt and dedicated to Rome and Augustus, but see Ward-Perkins 1982 for a different chronology of buildings in the forum of Lepcis. Inscription: *IPT* 25 (cf. *IRT* 294), for the date of which, *IPT* p. 61 n. 4. On Shadrapa, see Levi Della Vida 1942; Starcky 1949: 67–81; Caquot 1952; cf. Halff 1963–4: 70; Brouquier-Reddé 1992b: 84. Also known: *IPT* 31; Brouquier-Reddé 1992b: 84. Brouquier-Reddé 1992a maintains that different Phoenician-Punic religious preferences can be detected at Sabratha and Lepcis, Sabratha owing more to the influence of Carthage, Lepcis to Tyre and Sidon, and that neither city worshipped Libyan gods (cf. Brouquier-Reddé [1992b]: 249). This does not affect the point I wish to make regarding Oea, that in one form or another the Punic religious tradition, unknowable from Apuleius's evidence, is likely to have been very strong.

13 Living language: Ward-Perkins 1971: 103; Mattingly 1995: 52, 161; see Benabou 1976: 488–9 for speculative remarks on the distribution of Latin, Neo-Punic, and Libyan in North Africa, and Millar 1983b: 57–8 for the strength of Punic culture in the 'Roman' West at large. The sight of bilingual and even trilingual religious inscriptions (e.g., *IPT* 16 = *IRT* 481, Latin, Punic, Greek) has to be an important factor in understanding the physical context of Apuleius's historical experience. Pudentilla: *Apol*. 82.2, 83.1, 84.2; see de Marre 2004. Celebrated: Kotula 1969; Pavis d'Escurac 1974: 96. Elsewhere: *Flor*. 18.16, *uox mea utraque lingua iam uestris auribus … cognita*. Language of the streets: cf. Reynolds 1989: 117–18. Claim: *Apol*. 98.8.

14 Formalization: Mattingly 1995: 123, 125. Dedication: *IPT* 18; Brouquier-Reddé 1992b: 90–1, 196, observing that the god was ultimately replaced by Neptune, though the inscription belongs to the early third century (on Neptune cults in Africa, see Benabou 1976: 356–9). Hybrids: Amadasi Guzzo 1981. For an overview of Punic cultural survivals, see Fantar 1990.

15 Population: see chap. 1. Dedication: Brouquier-Reddé 1992b: 192–3, with *IRT* 229, 246, *IPT* 5. Remains: Haynes 1955: 104; Brouquier-Reddé 1992b: 65–7 (with fig. 23). Attribution: Brouquier-Reddé 1992b: 67; cf. Di Vita 1968b: 200. Inscription: *IRT* 230, identifying L. Aemilius Frontinus, who held the consulship, probably between 164 and 168, and the proconsulate of Asia, probably under Commodus, and his senatorial brother Aemilius Sulla; see Guey 1954: 117–18; Corbier 1982: 727–8. They are regarded as 'of Punico-Libyan stock by paternal descent' by Thompson 1971: 248. Related: Guey 1954: 117–18; Corbier 1982: 727–8. Regarded: Fantham 1995: 224.

16 Lepcis: *IRT* 263, 264, 265, 396; cf. Brouquier-Reddé 1992b: 287. Gigthis: Pisanu 1989: 228, referring to a fragment of a relief 'raffigurante una gamba ed un

bastone circondato da una serpente.' Inscription from Oea: *IRT* 231. Whether there was a temple to Liber Pater at Oea is disputed: Brouquier-Reddé 1992b: 193–4. Inscription from Sabratha: *IRT* 117, the sole record of such a priesthood, held by Flavius Pudens (above, n. 9); Bruhl 1953: 224; Bassignano 1974: 48, 50. But there was a temple to Liber Pater at Sabratha and his image appears on coins from the era of Augustus: Brouquier-Reddé 1992b: 37–44. Attested: Bruhl 1953: 223–38; cf. Benabou 1976: 351–6. Conceptualized: cf. Ward-Perkins 1971: 104, noting how the classical gods of Tripolitania 'barely conceal' local Semitic and Libyan counterparts. (Di Vita 1982: 562 tentatively links Oea's patron deities Apollo and Minerva with Reshef and Tanit.) The origins of Liber Pater are complex: cf. Bruhl 1953: 235: 'Le culte de Liber Pater pratiqué dans les provinces africaines du IIe au IVe siècle était spécifiquement syncrétiste, car Sémites, Berbères, Latins et Grecs y avaient porté chacun leur contribution.' (Contrast Hunink 1997: II 150). Note, however, that Bruhl (1953: 236) takes Apuleius's reference to Liber Pater to indicate similarity between the mystery cult in Oea and the mysteries of Dionysus in Greece. For Eshmun as the counterpart of Aesculapius, Halff 1963–4: 67–9; Benabou 1976: 359–62; Brouquier-Reddé 1992b: 268. Observe the clear conclusion from a study of Pomponius Mela: 'The people of the North African shore seem to have retained into the early decades of the first century A.D. customs traceable as much to the Phoenician as to the Graeco-Roman tradition' (Batty 2000: 83).

17 Required: Treggiari 1991b: 66, 73–4.

18 Prospects: Bradley 1991a: 156–62; cf. Humbert 1972: 76–92; Treggiari 1991b: 501–2.

19 Whatever the economic independence exercised by Pudentilla (cf. Gutsfeld 1992), it remains true that she was not independent in all aspects of her life. Suitors: *Apol*. 68.4, 71.2 (surely not proposed by the elder Sicinius [Hunink 1998: 289], but exactly the reverse). Matchmaker: *Apol*. 71.3, 72.4–5, 73.1, 73.3–6, 73.8, 80.4, 83.1. General wish: *Apol*. 70.8–71.1; cf. 80.4, 83.1. Still suitors: *Apol*. 69.1. Committed: *Apol*. 77.6–7.

20 Quintus: Bradley 1991a: 184. Criteria: *Apol*. 73.4; cf. 92.6–11; see in full Treggiari 1991b: 83–124. Union: *Apol*. 92.4. Procreation: *Apol*. 88.4–6; cf. 91.7. Marital ideology: Treggiari 1991b: 8–9; cf. Bradley 1991a: 6–8, 127–8.

21 Hunink 1997: II 182 on the frequency in Roman history of marriage to husband's brother cites a source giving two examples, one of which is legendary, the other unusual (cf. n. 22).

22 Vilification: *Apol*. 74.5–75. Wealthy: he is said to have inherited a fortune of HS3 million (*Apol*. 75.8), a sum well in excess of the minimum senatorial census requirement; cf. Gutsfeld 1992: 259. Equestrian: his father is said (*Apol*. 75.7) to have resigned his equestrian status; in a loose sense, however,

Herennius must have been locally regarded as of exceptional standing. Note that according to *Apol*. 76.3, Apuleius and Pudentilla disapproved Pontianus's marriage to Herennia. Favoured: *Apol*. 97.7, 99.1, where the term *socero* gives the clearest indication. Will: *Apol*. 97.5–6. Regional tradition: cf. Fantham 1995: 223, pointing to the not quite parallel example of Ruth and Boaz; note also the marriage of Mazaetullus to the widow of his kinsman the Numidian king Gala (Livy 29.29.4–13), speculatively set within a pre-Punic polygamous context by Ilevbare 1973: 24–8. Not typical: the marriage of the triumvir M. Licinius Crassus to his brother's widow (Plut. *Crass*. 1.1) was exceptional. Levirate marriage: Westbrook 1977; Goody 1983: 40, 60; Ziskind 1988: 92–3, 104–7; Alvarez-Pereyre and Heymann 1996: 179–82; Tallan 1992: 116; cf. Thompson 1973: 2; the suggestion advanced is no more than circumstantially based, but indicates even so how little is really known about local practices, which cannot be assumed always to have been identical to those of Rome and Italy. Connected: Millar 1983b: 59; Feldman 1993: 327–8.

23 Record: see Kenney 1983: 141 for the *testimonia*; cf. Harrison 2000: 1–10. Allusions: see chap. 1. Recollection: *Flor*. 15.

24 Diana and Actaeon: see chap. 2 n. 11; cf. Slater 1994. Statuette: *Apol*. 63.7–8; cf. Hunink 1997: II 167–8, without asking how Apuleius's tastes had been formed. Too 1996: 138 finds in *Flor*. 15 evidence of Apuleius's personal discomfort in being portrayed in honorific statues; I cannot understand this. Hunink 2001: 139–41 follows Harrison 2000: 114–16 scrupulously in the sophistic emphasis of his comments on *Flor*. 15, for which Lee 2005: 134 suggests a date of 162/3.

25 Greek knowledge: Le Bohec 1996, stressing that Apuleius's learning had nothing of the African about it (but minimizing in my view the Roman element). Sophists: Harrison 2000 investigates sophistic influences on Apuleius in detail. *De Oratore*: 1.60, 68–9 (Crassus), 1.219–33 (Antonius), 1.212 (Antonius's concession); observe also 1.128 and 3.56–68. *Orator*: 12–16, 113–19. *Brutus*: 322.

26 Quint. *Inst*. 12.2.4–28.

27 For representative illustration of the importance of wide-ranging *doctrina* in the Roman rhetorical and public tradition, see Cic. *Orat*. 13, 34, 120, 146; *De or*. 1.5, 1.16–18, 1.128, 1.147–59, 1.165–203, 2.5–6, 2.36, 3.30; *Brut*. 322; Quint. *Inst*. 2.12.8, 2.19.2, 10.1.27–30, 10.1.31–4, 10.1.37–122, 10.3.1–33, 12.1.9, 12.2.29–31, 12.3.1–10, 12.4.1; Fronto, *M. Caes*. 3.8.1–2, 3.11, 4.3.2–3, 5.22; *Ant. Imp*. 1.2.5; *Ver. Imp*. 1.1; *De nep. amiss*. 2.8; *Ad am*. 1.1.3, 1.2 (*paideia*), 1.3, 1.4, 1.5.

28 Distinction: *Apol*. 9.6, *apud Graecos*, 9.8, *apud nos*, 18.7–12, 25.2, 25.9, 50.7. *De mundo* 17: see Beaujeu 2002 [1973]: 326, and cf. Méthy 1983: 46. Appeals: *Apol*. 18.9–12. Favorinus: Philost. *VS* 489; cf. Holford-Strevens 1988: 72–92; Gleason 1995; Swain 1996: 44–5.

29 Tombs: Fontana 2001. Ghirza: Mattingly 2003b.

4 Animalizing the Slave

1 Cf. also Arist. *Met*. 1075a20–2: in the household slaves and animals show little responsibility and generally act at random. Quotations: trans. Barker. For discussion of Aristotle's views, see Brunt 1993; Garnsey 1996: 110–15.

2 Xenophon: Pomeroy 1994: 319 compares *Cyrop*. 8.43–4. Columella: *bubulcis pastoribusque cellae ponantur iuxta sua pecora, ut ad eorum curam sit opportunus excursus* (trans. Ash). *Andrapodon*: Finley 1980: 99; Harvey 1988: 42. For comparable Jewish sources, see Hezser 2005: 57–8.

3 Aristotle's evidence: cf. *Pol*. 1253b: 'the slave is an animate article of property' (Barker). Note also Pl. *Plt*. 280; Dio Chrys. *Or*. 15.24. *Lex Aquilia*: Crawford 1996: II 723–6 (J.A. Crook). First provision: translation as in Crawford from the reconstructed text (cf. Crook 1984: 67–77, esp. 72 for the inclusion of *pecudem* in the first provision); whether the third provision originally specified damage to slaves and animals is unknown (Crawford 1996: II 726), but note Gaius, *Inst*. 3.217 (cf. 3.212, 3.219); *Dig*. 9.2.27.6. Compilers: see *Dig*. 9.2 passim. Edict of the Aediles: *Dig*. 21.1.1.1, 21.1.38 pr. Ulpian: *Causa autem huius edicti eadem est, quae mancipiorum redhibendorum. Et fere eadem sunt in his, quae in mancipiis, quod ad morbum uitiumque attinet: quidquid igitur hic diximus, huc erit transferendum*. For criticism of treating slaves as beasts of burden, see Plut. *Cato maior* 5.

4 Common phenomenon: Jacoby 1994: 89–90, followed by Davis 1998. Arab poet: al-Mutannabi, quoted by Lewis 1990: 59–60. David Cooper: quoted from Jordan 1973: 276.

5 See Jordan 1973: 3–43, 232–4, 482–511; Davis 1966: 453–64. For animalizing views of Blacks in Muslim sources, see Lewis 1990: 52–3.

6 Origins: Lovejoy 1936: 52–8. Racial prejudice: Sherwin-White 1967; Snowden 1983; Thompson 1989. Natural world: cf. Beagon 1992, esp. 124–58. Hierarchically ordered: for texts on the theme of the supposed superiority of animals to human beings, predicated on the opposite starting assumption, see Lovejoy and Boas 1935: 389–420. Commodification: also present in later European attitudes towards Africans but inextricably enmeshed with racial views. Caesar's capture: Plut. *Caes*. 1.4–2.4; Suet. *Iul*. 74.1.

7 Opening pages: *Met*. 1.6–8. Major themes: Schlam 1992: 58–66. On slavery in the *Metamorphoses*, see Annequin 1997, 2007, and cf. Fitzgerald 2000: 87–114; its thematic importance, both literally and metaphorically, is evident from the wide range of vocabulary related to the institution used throughout the novel, on which see Vasconcelos 2009.

8 Transformation: Gianotti 1983: 127–8 draws attention to relevant Platonic correspondences (e.g., *Phdr*. 249b, *Ti*. 91d–2c, *Phd*. 81c [especially interesting for its reference to the ass]). Firmly established: a comprehensive portrait of Lucius is

not given at the beginning of the *Metamorphoses*, but is only revealed gradually through various passing references; for the relevant details up to the moment of transformation, see *Met*. 1.1, 1.2, 1.20, 1.23, 1.24, 1.26, 2.2, 2.3, 2.31, 3.11, 3.15. *Quis ille?*: on the fundamental theme of identity, see Bakhtin 1981: 111–29; for the problem of who is speaking at the beginning of the novel, see Harrison 2000: 228, with references; the contributions in Kahane and Laird 2001 (inconclusive, but as far as I can understand books do not speak in any real world, or invite responses, as is often critically claimed); and the summary of Keulen 2007a: 11–13. Decurial sector: Lucius is never so identified, but it is clear that he belongs to the same social level as, for instance, the decurion introduced at *Met*. 10.1 or the Corinthian magistrate Thiasus, introduced at *Met*. 10.18; see Mason 1983, suggesting that Lucius may even have been of senatorial origin, and cf. Harrison 2000: 215–20, who sees Lucius as an aspirant sophist. *Met*. 8.24 is relevant for citizenship. Finkelpearl 2007 discusses the complexity of his character. On Corinth as a Roman colony, see Walters 2005; and on its possible literary associations, Graverini 2002. Background: Millar 1981 (a fundamental study).

9 Asinine form: *Met*. 3.24: *sed plane pili mei crassantur in setas et cutis tenella duratur in corium et in extimis palmulis perdito numero toti digiti coguntur in singulas ungulas et de spinae meae termino grandis cauda procedit. Iam facies enormis et os prolixum et nares hiantes et labiae pendulae; sic et cures inmodicis horripilant auctibus. Nec ullum miserae reformationis uideo solacium, nisi quod mihi iam nequeunti tenere Photidem natura crescebat*. See Schlam 1992: 99–112, on the theme of animal and human in the *Metamorphoses*. Gianotti 1983 maintains that loss of freedom is a key ethical theme in the novel. Ugliness: cf. Hopkins 1993: 13, 15, on the appearance of Aesop; and for some examples of a Roman taste for deformed slaves, see Garland 1995: 46–8.

10 *Met*. 3.26–9 (note esp. 3.25, *humano gestu simul et uoce priuatus*; 3.26, *perfectus asinus et pro Lucio iumentum*). Descent: cf. the literary use of animal metaphors to connote an absence of civilization observed by Wiedemann 1986; the connection made by Dupont 1999: 190–1 between Lucius's change of form and a putative abandonment of erotic interest for storytelling seems to me implausible. Topical: cf. Bradley 1987: 123–6. Tamed: confirmed at *Met*. 4.2, *pecori*; cf. 7.13, *iumentorum*. On the importance of the rose in Apuleius's narrative, see chap. 2.

11 Unrecognizable: *Met*. 3.26, *agnitione*. Isolated: *Met*. 3.27, *in solitudinem*; cf. 4.1, *solitudo*. Aware: *Met*. 3.26, *pro Lucio iumentum*. Shaming: *Met*. 3.26, *contumelia*; on the theme of shame at large in the *Metamorphoses*, see Lateiner 2001. Learns: *Met*. 3.26, *melior me sententia reuocauit*. Resign: *Met*. 3.29, *casum praesentem tolerans*. Ability: cf. Sen. *Ep*. 47.3; on loss of voice and loss of identity, see Finkelpearl 1998: 192; the effect is not the same in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*; see Solodow 1988: 190–1.

12 *Met*. 7.17 (cruel boy), cf. 7.18, 7.20; 8.15 (herdsmen), cf. 8.16; 8.27 (Syrian priests; the history of the Dea Syria is comprehensively discussed by Lightfoot 2003: 1–85), cf. 8.28, 8.30, 9.4; 9.32 (market gardener), cf. 9.33; 9.39 (swaggering soldier), cf. 10.1; 10.13 (slave chefs); 7.15, 9.11 (mill). Long understood: see Moritz 1958: 65 for a list of passages from Plautus connecting slaves with punishment in the mill; cf. Millar 1984: 143–4; and Schlam 1992: 99.

13 *Met*. 6.25 (lame); 7.17, 7.28, 8.30, 9.15 (sadistic); 6.28 (Charite); 7.23–4 (castration); 7.21–2 (bestiality); 7.27 (mother). See also *Met*. 3.29, 4.3, 4.4, 7.15, 7.25, 9.11. Cf. Schlam 1992: 72–3: 'Being beaten is the Ass's most frequent experience.' Answerable: on the association between beating and servitude, see Finley 1980: 93–5; cf. Saller 1991.

14 Syrian priests: *Met*. 8.26; cf. Hopkins 1993: 16–17, on the sale of Aesop. Corinthian noblewoman: *Met*. 10.19–22. Willing victim: cf. the reference in Lewis 1990: 97 to 'a Persian manuscript of the famous *Masnavi* of Rumi, completed in Tabriz in about 1530, illustrating an episode in the poem in which a woman discovers her maidservant copulating with an ass and tries, with disastrous results, to do the same' (Illus. 22). It is notable that scenes of sexual union between women and quadrupeds (perhaps asses) appear on Greek lamps of the imperial age from Athens and Corinth, and may have a connection with a pre-Apuleian version of the ass story; see Bruneau 1965, 1977; the tradition is very old: Stramaglia 2010: 181. Publicly exhibiting: *Met*. 10.23, 10.29 (note *ingentique angore oppido suspensus, clades ultimas*), 10.34–5 (note *praeter pudorem obeundi publice concubitus*). Cf. Schlam 1992: 72–3. For sources on the sexual exploitation of slaves, see Kolendo 1981.

15 Times: *Met*. 8.23–5, 9.10, 9.31, 10.13, 10.17. Unrealistically: Duncan-Jones 1974: 249. Protest: *Met*. 7.3. Vent: *Met*. 8.29. Fable: Phaedr. 1.15. Suicide: *Met*. 7.24, 10.29; Michalopoulos 2002 points to these items as examples of a literary motif. Pleasure: *Met*. 7.26, *tacitus licet serae uindictae gratulabar*. On the pyschological effects of sale, note the response of the Tolpuddle martyr James Hammet when asked why he refused to talk about his experiences as a convict labourer: 'If you'd been sold like a sheep for £1 would *you* want to talk about it?' (Thompson 1994: 191).

16 *Met*. 7.3, 7.27 (fellow-slave); 9.11 (mill); 9.32 (new owner); 11.15 (Mithras, 'servile pleasures' [on which see the Endnote]); 7.12 (non-existent: *contempta mea praesentia quasi uere mortui*; cf. 3.29, *nihil a mortuo differebam*). For the notion of slavery as social death, see Patterson 1982; cf. in a different sense Gianotti 1983: 136–7. Bowersock 1994: 109 draws a connection between death and 'the servility of a captive' through Apuleius's use of the phrase *postliminio mortis* at *Met*. 10.12 (cf. 2.28, 3.25).

17 'Cappadocian': *Met*. 8.24 (cf. Mart. 6.77, 10.76). 'Novice servant': *Met*. 8.26. Servile vocabulary: *Met*. 8.24, *ciuem Romanum pro seruo, bonum et frugi*

mancipium; 8.26, *seruum … pulchellum, hominem seruulum, seruum, uicarius*. Sales documents: for a catalogue of 157 attestations of donkey sales from Egypt (mid-second century BC–sixth/seventh century AD), see Litinas 1999. *Familia: Met*. 9.13 (which to my mind resolves the doubts of Millar 1984: 129–30 on the workers' servile status). Iconographic sources: Moritz 1958: 78–9; cf. 100. Tomb: Nash 1981: II 329–32.

18 Varro: *Rust*. 2.1.14, 2.6.1–6, 3.17.6. Columella: *Rust*. 7.1.1–3. Pliny: *HN* 8.167–70. On the ordinary ass, see White 1970: 293–4, 299–300; Toynbee 1973: 192–7; cf. at great length *RE* VI, 1 s.v. 'Esel' (Dick). Figurines of the ass with panniers can be seen in museums with rooms devoted to everyday life in antiquity, and representations of the ass turning mills are strikingly on display in the Vatican. See Supplement no. 8. Agents: asses are required of the city of Sagalassus in Pisidia for official imperial use, in the event of an absence of mules, in an inscription from the early reign of Tiberius published by Mitchell 1976; with the common abuse of local facilities (Mitchell 1976: 114–15), cf. *Met*. 9.39. Graffito: *CLE* 1978, shown in Bonner 1977: 123 (fig. 12); cf. Moritz 1958: 83. Terracotta: shown in Bonner 1977: 124 (fig. 13). Poor food: for references to the Ass's food supply, see *Met*. 3.29, 4.3, 7.14, 7.15, 9.32, 10.13, 10.16; cf. Heath 1982. Very symbol: Artem. 1.24, 1.37; cf. Gianotti 1983: 131–2.

19 Docility: *Met*. 8.24, *de mansuetudine*: cf. 10.35, *tam mansuetum … asinum*. Other instruments: Bradley 1987. Note that Jacoby 1994 draws a parallel between the domestication of animals following the Neolithic Revolution and the rise of slavery (especially in Mesopotamia), thereby characterizing slavery as a domestication of human beings in which the urge to control was as strong as in the domestication of wild beasts. The parallel has much appeal, but the overall argument, covering an enormous amount of time and space, is clearly very speculative. It is accepted by Davis 1998. Significantly, the 'progressive juvenilization' morphologically visible in domesticated animals is not evident in historical slave populations. Examples from the *Metamorphoses* of the fear under which slaves lived as a matter of course are described by Annequin 2007.

20 Harriet Jacobs: Yellin 1987: 44, 28 (my emphasis; cf. 52: 'She selected the most brutalized, over whom her authority could be exercised with less fear of exposure'). Frederick Douglass: Gates 1987: 282. H. Augustus Cowper: Conrad 1983: 71–6.

21 Bolted: cf. *Dig*. 9.2.27.34. Proverbial: Plaut. *Pseud*. 135; Ov. *Am*. 2.7.15–16. Gardener: *Met*. 4.3. Photis: *Met*. 3.26. Many occasions: *Met*. 3.29 (emperor), 4.4 (rooted), 6.26 (run away; cf. also 6.27), 7.24, 10.29 (suicide), 7.28 (dung), 8.16 (hide), 9.1 (slave cook), 9.2 (bolts again), 9.11 (mill), 9.26–7 (takes revenge), 10.13–14 (pilfers), 10.35 (once more), 4.5 (tricks, schemes, dissembling); cf. also 8.25.

22 Human mind: see Schlam 1992: 153 n. 5 for passages stressing the Ass's *sensus humanus*. Sleep: cf. *Met*. 9.2. Human responses: Bradley 1994b: 107–31, with reference to comparative material. Acquiescent: *Met*. 4.5; 3.29.

23 Reality: cf. Davis 1998: xv. Enticed: Bradley 1987. Reward: *Met*. 7.15; cf. 7.16 (*liber asinus laetus*). Quadruped: *Met*. 4.1, 6.27, 6.28, 7.3 (note *in bestiam et extremae sortis quadripedem* with Bakhtin 1981: 121, for the notion that the condition of the ass was lower than that of the slave); cf. also 7.27, 11.12. Forms of behaviour: Bradley 1994b: 107–31; cf. Cartledge 1985. Valued: cf. *Met*. 8.29: the Ass as a valuable piece of livestock to be tracked down if stolen.

24 Influential view: Winkler 1985. Another: Shumate 1996; cf. chap. 2. Yet another: Finkelpearl 1998. Full complexity: Bakhtin 1981: 115 (for a sound introductory study, see Schlam 1992; cf. Harrison 2000, stressing the importance of 'literary entertainment and cultural display' [259] in the work). Fundamental pattern: Bakhtin 1981: 118; cf. 121 (the Christianizing terminology is problematical, but that may be the responsibility of the translators rather than the author *ipse*). Faced squarely: on slavery as a problem in antiquity, see Garnsey 1996; cf. Bradley 1997.

25 Domestic entourages: *Met*. 2.19, 4.24, 7.13, 8.31, 9.2, 10.13, 10.15, 10.16, 10.17, 10.20. Rural slaves: *Met*. 7.15–16, 7.17–28, 8.1, 8.15–23, 9.10–13. Lucius himself: *Met*. 2.31, 3.27; cf. 11.18, 11.20. Milo: *Met*. 1.21, 1.23, 1.26. For a list of slave personnel in the *Metamorphoses* and Apuleius's other writings, see Norden 1912: 72 n. 1. Adulterous steward: *Met*. 8.22. Herdsmen: *Met*. 8.15–23. Terrified cook: *Met*. 8.31. Note how at *Met*. 9.2 Myrmex is depicted as a typical thieving slave who will steal shoes at the baths, and who becomes the object of violence from a free citizen without any discomfiture on his owner's part (cf. Glancy 2000: 80). Called: Bakhtin 1981: 111. Commit suicide: Bradley 1994b: 44, 48, 110, 111–12. Run away: Bradley 1994b: 117–21, 126–8. Vedius Pollio: Syme 1961: 23–4, 29; cf. Bradley 1987: 121, 126. Cowper: Conrad 1983: 73–5.

26 Date of composition: Schlam 1992: 12. Adapted: Schlam 1992: 22–8. Aspects: *Onos* 15, 16, 18, 19, 22, 24, 29, 30, 42 (beatings); 16, 19, 28, 34, 37, 39, 41 (labour); 35, 42, 43, 46, 48 (disposal). The ass in the *Onos* on one occasion expresses a timelessly important, and perfectly sensible, statement of understanding of the consequences of being beaten: 'I learned by experience that a slave should do his duty without waiting for his master's hand' [42]). Mirrors: Millar 1981.

27 Maturity: for details of Apuleius's biography, see Sandy 1997: 1–36; Harrison 2000: 1–10. Slave-owner: Apul. *Apol*. 17; cf. Hunink 1997: II 68–71. Four hundred: Apul. *Apol*. 93.4.

28 Trade: Law 1967. It is worth noting that slaves are mentioned together with various animals (and other commodities) – horses, mules, asses, cows, bulls, pigs, sheep, goats – in the Zarai tariff inscription (*CIL* VIII 4508); cf. Frank 1938: 80–2 (R.M. Haywood). Epigram: *Anth. Lat*. 183; cf. Snowden 1983: 83–4; Thompson 1989: 36–8. Mosaics, objects of art: Desanges 1976: 260–5; Dunbabin 1978: 274, 275 (cf. 162); Snowden 1983: 88; Blásquez 1998). Perpetual appeal: it is enough to refer in general to relevant scenes from the Column of Trajan and

the Column of Marcus Aurelius (see Hannestad 1988: 160–1, 238–41), and for local manifestations of the image in Tripolitania to the Arch of Marcus Aurelius at Oea and the Arch of Septimius Severus at Lepcis Magna; cf. Bradley 2004. Extent: Desanges 1976: 254, 257 (highly sceptical); cf. Snowden 1983: 123 n. 71. Nineteenth century: Wright 1998; cf. Lewis 1990: 11–13, 41, 57–9, 72–3. See in full chap. 9. Slave witnesses: Apul. *Apol*. 44.6–7, 45.1. Trial: cf. chap. 1. Daily life: cf. Plin. *HN* 17.41 on the ass used for ploughing in Byzacium.

29 Novel evidence; cf. Hopkins 1993. Tamed animals: Yellin 1987: 21, 22, 48, 76, 92, rob, 156; cf. 16, on considerate treatment from sympathetic Northerners: 'How gratifying this was, can be fully understood only by those who have been accustomed to be treated as if they were not included within the pale of human beings.' 'Wild beast of Slavery': Yellin 1987: 35. Tiger: Yellin 1987: 199, Jacobs writing in reference to her daughter: 'I thought of what I had suffered in slavery at her age, and my heart was like a tiger's when a hunter tries to seize her young.' Rose: *Met*. 3.29, *spe salutis alacer*; 4.1, *candens … rosarium*; 11.13, *rosis amoenis* (cf. chap. 2, Postscript).

30 Suggestion: Davis 1998: xviii (quoted). Issue: Bradley 1997: 282.

5 Fictive Families

1 For the conventions of Roman family life (with reference particularly to elite families), see Rawson 1986, 1991; Bradley 1991a; Treggiari 1991a, 1991b; Dixon 1992; Saller 1994; Rawson and Weaver 1997.

2 Cf. Bradley 1991a: 4–5.

3 Realistic novel: Bakhtin 1981: 126–7, 246–7; see further Watt 2001; Eagleton 2005. The prominent critic and novelist D. Lodge has written of the modern novel: 'We cannot ignore the fact that the novel as a genre is rooted in the convention of realism' (Lodge 2002b: 43). Carol Shields's *Swann* (1987) is a contemporary Canadian example of academic relevance. Its story concerns a perverse book collector who, in an effort to gain financial security, tries to acquire through a series of well-timed thefts all the copies of the obscure Mary Swann's one published volume of poems, the manuscript of some verses discovered in her house after her death, all the known records and memorabilia of her life, and all the research materials of a cluster of scholars studying her poetry. It is an essentially implausible story, designed to entertain its reader through the creation of a mystery: what is happening to the records of Mary Swann's life and who is responsible for their disappearance? But it achieves credibility because it is set in a real world that the reader, and especially the academic reader, can recognize at once: as in the story, scholars in real life do write books and articles about poets and poetry, correspond with one another about their common intellectual passions, and gather together in comfortable

hotels for symposia at which they share the outcome of their researches. Imperial milieu: Millar 1981.

4 Adaptation: on the relationship of the *Metamorphoses* to other versions of the ass story, see Schlam 1992: 22–8; Mason 1994 (proposing that the work Apuleius adapted was written in the late first century or the early second century); cf. Stephens and Winkler 1995: 322–5 on Apuleius and Lollianos. Commentators: Schlam 1992: 25, 124–5; Mason 1994: 1696–9. Tales of adultery: see chap. 12. Equivalents: *Onos* 1–16 *passim* (Milo equivalent), 26–34 passim (Charite equivalent), 39 (slave cook), 42 (miller), 43 (market gardener; cf. 18, where the first market gardener appears, but without a wife), 46 (slave brothers). Allusions: Millar 1981.

5 Entertain: *Met*. 1.1: *Lector intende: laetaberis* (Kenney 2003: 171 n. 36 takes this to indicate that the *Metamorphoses* has to be read twice, for reasons I do not altogether understand). Literary topos: Watson 1995: 105–7 points out that *Met*. 10.2–12 combines two stock themes, 'the amorous stepmother and the woman who administers poison to her stepson'; she also comments on the 'folktale elements' in the story. *Educator, paedagogus*: on such attendants in real life, Bradley 1991a: 37–75. Dotal slave: for the authentic situation, Treggiari 1991b: 326, 327, 349. Remarriage: Humbert 1972; cf. Bradley 1991a: 156–76. Helvia: Sen. *Helv*. 2.4. Galba: Suet. *Galba* 4.1. Caring stepmothers: see Watson 1995: 149–50 for other examples, and cf. the legal sources cited by Noy 1991: 347. Demographic regime: Saller 1994; cf. Parkin 1992. Finkelpearl 1998: 159 maintains that the 'central theme' of *Met*. 10 is the 'confusion and perversion of natural relationships' (in part) 'among family members'; as a result, 'kinship is not viewed in a positive light' (161). This view might be tempered by considering the family stories in *Met*. 10 from a demographic perspective.

6 Marcian: *Dig*. 48.9.5: *Diuus Hadrianus fertur, cum in uenatione filium suum quidam necauerat, qui nouercam adulterabat, in insulam eum deportasse, quod latronis magis quam patris iure eum interfecit: nam patria potestas in pietate debet, non atrocitate consistere*; cf. Watson 1995: 136–9. Galen: *On Antecedent Causes* 14.183 (the work, known only through the Latin version of Niccolò da Reggio, is tentatively dated to 169–74 by Hankinson 1998: 49–52; the incident is represented as plausible to Galen's audience, but not necessarily recent. Hankinson's translation is quoted).

7 Writers on agriculture: Var. *Rust*. 1.17.5; Col. *Rust*. 1.8.5; cf. Bradley 1987: 50–1. Funerary inscriptions: Rawson 1966; Treggiari 1975, 1981; cf. Bradley 1987: 77–8; Joshel 1992: 43–6. Cato: *Agr*. 134.2, 141.2, 141.3. Cicero: see references in Bradley 1991a: 171–82.

8 Counted: the families and households of the *Metamorphoses* are listed in the chapter's Endnote. Egyptian households: Bagnall and Frier 1994: 57–74 (additional materials in Bagnall, Frier, and Rutherford 1997 and Duttenhöffer 1997). Unique

features: on brother-sister marriage, see Hopkins 1980; Shaw 1992; Bagnall and Frier 1994: 127–33; if a phenomenon unique to Egypt, its incidence, geographical extent, and purpose continue to be debated: see with references Huebner 2007; Remijsen and Clarysse 2008; Rowlandson and Takahashi 2009. For present purposes, whatever the limitations of the census declarations from which information on Egyptian households is derived, the complexity they reveal remains an important feature of social organization that is likely to have had widespread applicability in the imperial age. The oddity of brother-sister marriage underscores the importance of identifying locally specific elements of social life, even as general characteristics are observed, and of keeping them in mind as literary texts are evaluated. On slave-owning, Bieżuńska-Małowist 1977; cf. Bagnall and Frier 1994: 48–9.

9 Marriages: the degree of emotional commitment between husbands and wives at the time of first marriage is a complex subject (see Dixon 1985; 1992: 83–90, 210–12; Bradley 1991a: 6–8, 126–30; Treggiari 1991b: 119–22), and no broad characterizations will cover all cases over an enormous chronological and geographical span of history; nonetheless, I think that the starting point of Roman marriage was culturally distinct from the modern Western norm, in which the decision to marry depends essentially on the wishes of the two principals concerned, no matter what other factors might be peripherally involved (e.g., wider family wishes, matters of social or economic status). Frangoulidis 1996 detects the influence of the Roman *deductio in domum mariti* in the story of Charite and Tlepolemus. Concordant ideal: Bradley 1991a: 6–8; Treggiari 1991b: 251–3. (At *Met*. 9.27, *ex secta prudentium* perhaps refers to men such as Musonius Rufus and Plutarch and their relatively enlightened attitudes towards marriage, on which see Treggiari 1991b: 220–6.) On marriage between cousins (as with Charite and Tlepolemus), see Treggiari 1991b: 109–10, 112–18. Adultery: Treggiari 1991b: 262–319, 507–8, 509–10; cf. Richlin 1992: 215–19. Note especially Treggiari's comment on the Julian law on adultery: 'The continuous interest of jurists in the law suggests that their concerns were not merely theoretical and that there was a critical mass of prosecutions' (297). *Lex Julia*: for its provisions and development, see most fully McGinn 1998: 140–247. See further chap. 12.

10 Children: on the valuation of children, see Garnsey 1991; Shaw 1991; Bradley 1994a, 1999; Huskinson 1996; Rawson 1997b; Corbier 1999. Infant exposure: Harris 1994.

11 Conflict: Bradley 1991a: 177–204; cf. Dixon 1997. Personal life: see chaps. 1, 3. Reconstructions: Parkin 1992; Saller 1994; Bagnall and Frier 1994.

12 Mainland Greece: Alcock 1993.

13 For Apuleius's Greek works (now lost), see *Apol*. 36; *Flor*. 9.27–8; cf. Harrison 2000: 14–15.

14 On virtues ideally expected of women in marriage, see Treggiari 1991b: 232–41. For *pudicitia* specifically, Langlands 2006: 31–2, 37–8. Lateiner 2000: 316

believes that 'Lucius, if not Apuleius … views marriage as undependable, sexual trust as unimaginable, and conjugality as a likely source of humiliation and amusement for others.' This depends on an equation between the content of Apuleius's stories and Lucius's, if not Apuleius's, views; the further notion (323) that 'the pattern of discovering rot in the center of the essential social unit, the family, warns against sensual, especially sexual, pleasures and even against normal family life,' raises the difficult question of how 'normal family life' is to be defined and characterized; cf. similarly Finkelpearl 1998: 176 on 'family relationships' in *Met*. 10: 'These relationships are almost all perverse and contrary to the norm.' Ancient and modern norms may be different.

15 For the bare facts of Apuleius's life, see Harrison 2000: 1–10; cf. Sandy 1997: 1–36.

16 Legal allusions: Norden 1912; cf. Summers 1972. Literary allusions: Finkelpearl 1998, arguing that the manner in which Apuleius engages with the works of a whole sequence of earlier Latin authors – Cato, Lucretius, Livy, Virgil, Propertius, Seneca, Lucan, Tacitus – provides the key to recognizing his success in creating in the *Metamorphoses* an independent, original position for himself within the Latin literary tradition. In the *Apology*, Apuleius quotes from and alludes to previous writers from Homer to Hadrian, with ease and seeming omniscience, especially from the classical Greek philosophers; see chap. 1. For remarks on the difficulties involved in detecting allusion, see Bradley 2008.

17 *Romanitas*: chap. 3 n. 1 for references. Caelestis: Halsberghe 1984: 2204; Rives 1995: 65–6; Ben Abdallah and Ennabli 1998. Archaeology: Hurst 1999. Much later: the interval of more than 200 years is important and the passage of time no less significant in antiquity than now; cf. for a different view Hunink 2003: 83.

18 The development of Cillium is imperfectly known; see Gascou 1972: 86–9; Bassignano 1974: 70–1 for the possible dates of its foundation and elevation to municipal status. Poem: *CLE* 1552 = *CIL* VIII 212–13. Mausoleum: Pikhaus 1986; Lassère 1990; cf. Hitchner 1995: 495–6. See Supplement no. 9. Tradition: Moore 2009. Thomas 2007: 197 observes the Punic measurements of the tomb, but underestimates in my view its indigenous origins. Yasmina tomb: Norman and Haeckl 1993. Cultural mixture: for perspectives on the interaction involved, see Hitchner 1988, 1995; Mattingly 1997; MacMullen 2000: 30–49 (unconcerned about 'post-colonial guilt' [134]). Plutarch: *Mor*. 143A. Tertullian: *Apol*. 9.2–3; cf. Norman 2002, 2003, suggesting that children's burials at Carthage display a combination of Punic and Roman practices.

19 Composed: Harrison 2000: 9–10 summarizes the possibilities, preferring a very late date (cf. 250–1). *Doctrina: Apol*. 48.12. As Finkelpearl (1998: 23) remarks, 'in the second century it was fashionable to display the learning one possessed,' but the important issue (it seems to me) is that of how and under what

circumstances the learning was acquired. Alexandria: *Apol*. 72.1. Experience: I am not suggesting that the *Metamorphoses* is in any narrow sense an autobiographical work (for example, an account of how Apuleius became a devotee of Isis), only that the types of experience Lucius undergoes are broadly comparable to those Apuleius's education demanded of him (cf. Harrison 2000: 218).

20 From a multitude of passages in the *Metamorphoses* referring to travel, note especially 1.2 (terrain), 1.7 (terrain, outlaws), 1.15 (outlaws), 2.14 (dangers of sea travel), 3.28–9 (terrain), 7.4 (outlaws), 7.6 (sea travel), 7.25–6 (assault) 8.15 (terrain), 8.17 (assault), 9.9 (terrain), 9.36 (assault), 10.1 (assault). Walsh 1970: 142 comments on the irrelevance to the novel of Apuleius's life and personality, remarking, 'Study of daily life in second-century Carthage or Greece would be an unrewarding introduction to the *Metamorphoses*.' Contrast (preferably) Griffin 1997: 54, 'Literature is not a balloon floating in the air, but a plant with its roots firmly fixed in the earth.' Palace: Brodersen 1998.

6 Sacrificing the Family

1 Awareness: see chap. 2. Note that some items of vocabulary that appear in *Flor*. 1.3–4 also appear in a section of a roughly contemporaneous Christian treatise, the *Octavius* of Minucius Felix. Apuleius speaks of various sights that a pilgrim might notice in the landscape as he travelled, causing him to pause and offer up a prayer: 'an altar wreathed with flowers, a cave shaded with flowers, an oak loaded with horns, a beech crowned with hides, even a knoll consecrated by fencing, a trunk shaped by hewing, turf drenched with pouring, or a stone stained with smearing.' The words at issue come in the Latin phrases *fagus pellibus coronata* and *truncus dolamine effigiatus uel cespes libamine umigatus uel lapis unguine delibutus*. Minucius Felix (3.1) refers to 'stones, however carved and anointed and garlanded they may be,' the Latin for which is *lapides … effigiatos … et unctos et coronatos*. Because of the occurrence of *coronata/coronatos, effigiatus/effigiatos, lapis/lapides*, and *unguine delibutus/unctos*, the one passage may be said to echo the other, and on this a proposition has been advanced that Apuleius was writing in reply to assaults from Christians on traditional Roman religion (Hunink 2000a). However, Apuleius's text is an extract of a longer composition that does not survive in its entirety, and its context is unknown and unknowable. Consequently there can be no firm basis for making a connection with Christianity unless the force of the 'echo' is overwhelmingly convincing. But *lapis, unctus*, and *coronatus* are such common Latin words that to attribute their appearance in Minucius to Apuleian influence strains belief. The rare *effigiatus*, a word favoured by Apuleius, is more notable; but I hardly think that Apuleius had an exclusive claim on it and that any other author's use of the word must be an appropriating 'echo'; the Bardon

factor is relevant (Bradley 2008). Similarly, I do not find convincing the notion that Apuleius attacks Sicinius Aemilianus in the *Apology* as a Christian (Griset 1957; Birley 2005a: 250). For the Scillitan martyrs, see Musurillo 1972: 86–9, with Birley 1992: 37–40, who shows from their names that they were a mixed group, partly of native stock or tradition. P. Vigellius Saturninus: his full career is unknown, but he had previously been a legionary legate in Lower Moesia and had governed Lycia-Pamphylia before holding the consulship; other positions are likely; see Birley 1992: 38–9.

2 Celsus in Origen, *Contra Celsum* 3.55 (trans. Chadwick 1953: 165–6). On the date and identity of Celsus, see Chadwick 1953: xxiv–xxix: he is known only from Origen; for discussion see Wilken 1984: 94–125. As observed by Harnack 1966: 396, Origen does not deny the truth of Celsus's claim about children and women, 'he simply declares that they were all the better for it.' On the importance of women in Christian evangelism implicit in Celsus's text, see MacDonald 1996: 109–14.

3 On the traditional familial obligations of fathers and children in classical society, as well as something of the lived reality, see variously Dixon 1988: 26–8; Golden 1990; Eyben 1991; Treggiari 1991b: 125–60; Strauss 1993; Reinhartz 1993; Yarbrough 1993; Pomeroy 1997: 141–60; Parkin 2003: 205–16. Evidence: Bradley 1991a: 105–24. *Pater*: on the distinctiveness of *patria potestas* in Roman culture, see the vigorous statement of Cantarella 2003.

4 Cf. Barclay 1997: 74: 'Celsus reacts with the outrage of a man whose cultural assumptions are greatly threatened.' On Jesus' hostility to the family in the canonical Gospels, see Wilson 1992: 86, 254; for the paradoxical development of how (and simultaneously) early Christianity embedded itself in conventions of family life, see Barclay 1997: 75–8; and for various perspectives on the metaphorical use of family language by early Christians, see Aasgard 1997 and Sandnes 1997. For the practical effects of Christian 'brotherhood,' see Meeks 1986: 121–2, and on the replacement of the natural family by the Christian family, Meeks 1986: 125–6 (his concept of 'deep resocialization' [129] may minimize from a pagan perspective the revolutionary character of what was involved). Bowersock 1995: 44–5 relates the development of Christian family language to the 'spiritual family' concept inherent in 'ancient philosophical and rhetorical schools.' On the anti-familial character of the Gospel of Thomas, see Uro 1997.

5 On Christian asceticism in its various forms, see for example Frend 1984: index s.vv. 'Ascetics,' 'Monasticism'; Clark 1986; Brown 1988 (above all); Clark 1993: 94–118; MacDonald 1996: 127–82. Tendencies: Clark 1995. Records of martyrdom: standard collection in Knopf, Krüger, and Ruhbach 1965 and, with English translation, Musurillo 1972. In what follows I quote the translations of Musurillo and for the sake of convenience use his English titles for individual

martyrologies. Familial discord: the disruptive potential for family life of early Christianity has long been noted; see for example Harnack 1966: 393–8 (originally published in 1908); Dodds 1965 [1970]: 115–16 (from which my epigraph is taken); Lane Fox 1987: 423–4; Meeks 1986: 22–3, 129; MacDonald 1996: 111; Barclay 1997: 73–5 (with special reference to the New Testament); cf. Shaw 1993: 22; Nathan 2000: 48–51. Hopkins 1999: 115 sees 'internal conflict within the family' as a manipulable theme in the 'new genre of Christian literature' the martyr acts represent.

6 Everlasting glory: see Lane Fox 1987: 439–41, with especially Lucian, *Peregrinus* 13: 'The poor wretches have convinced themselves, first and foremost, that they are going to be immortal and live forever, in consequence of which they despise death and even willingly give themselves to death.' The remark is made in Lucian's account of the charismatic cultist Peregrinus of Parium, who burned himself to death at the Olympic games of 165, an event of which Apuleius conceivably knew. On this notion of voluntary martyrdom in the Antonine era, see Ste Croix 2006: chap. 4; cf. Birley 2006. Invention of martyrdom: Bowersock 1995. The martyr acts show in some cases that their authors were familiar with earlier models of resistance to authority akin to if not identical with Christian martyrdom, in particular the models of Socrates and the Jewish Mother of the Maccabees and her seven sons who died horrible deaths resisting the persecution of the Jews by the Seleucid monarch Antiochus IV. But the degree of similarity between the earlier models and the Christian accounts is disputed; see, in opposition to Bowersock, Boyarin 1999. For an argument that martyrdom does not appear in the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) until the Book of Daniel (and only then under Hellenistic influence), see Brettler 2002; for a firm statement on the existence of a Jewish-Greek tradition of martyrdom from the second century BC to the second century AD (at least), see Rajak 1997; and for a discussion of how Christian martyrdom both resembled and differed from examples of heroic death in the Roman tradition, see Straw 2002. In my view, connections between Christian martyrdoms and earlier models cannot be denied, but the stress placed on self-sacrifice as a hopeful means, if not a guarantee, of achieving a blessed afterlife (in contrast, say, to the Jewish tradition of 'dying for the Law' identified by Rajak 1997) distinguishes the Christian accounts from their predecessors. The Jewish martyrs of 4 Maccabees (Eleazar, the Mother of the Maccabees and her seven sons) are represented as finally standing 'before God's throne, enjoying a life of blessedness' (Rajak 1997: 40) and the Maccabean accounts certainly show some interest in eternal life (e.g., 2 Maccabees 7:9, 7:36); but the hope of resurrection is only one of several motivating factors controlling the Maccabean martyrdoms according to van Henten 1997; cf. Droge and Tabor 1992: 75–6, 156; see also Lane Fox 1987: 436–7; Ste Croix 2006: 193–8. On the pagan tradition of noble deaths, which to my mind have to be distinguished from Christian

martyrdoms on eschatological grounds, the material in Musurillo 1954: 236–46 remains very useful. Much might depend on the definition of martyrdom adopted. That provided by van Henten and Avemarie 2002: 3 ('a martyr is a person who in an extremely hostile situation prefers a violent death to compliance with a demand of the [usually pagan] authorities') seems to me to neglect the eschatological motivations and concerns evident in the Christian accounts. From a family history standpoint, the story of the Mother of the Maccabees cannot in any case be regarded as anticipating the episodes of familial disruption of concern here: there is no familial discord in the story at all. On the historicity and character of the Christian martyr acts at large, see variously Delehaye 1966 [1921]: 15–131; Frend 1965; Lane Fox 1987: 419–92 (an outstanding account); Bowersock 1995: 23–39; Hopkins 1999: 114–23. On the role in Christian trials perhaps played by provincial governors' personal religious views, note Rives 1996.

7 For the date of the episode, see Barnes 1968: 515; cf. Musurillo 1972: xvi–xvii. The case is very speculatively discussed by Grant 1985 and MacDonald 1996: 205–13; cf. Millar 1977: 562–3; Evans Grubbs 1995: 245–6. Lane Fox 1987: 423–4 regards it as symptomatic of others that never came to public attention.

8 On causes of divorce, see Treggiari 1991b: 461–5. On the presentation of appeals to the emperor by private citizens, see Millar 1977: 537–49.

9 Precedents: Bradley 1991a: 186–91. *Repudium*: Treggiari 1991b: 436–7, 438–40.

10 *Martyrdom of Marian and James* 8.2–11. For the date of the document, see Musurillo 1972: xxxiv (259; Lane Fox 1987: 488–9 gives 258), and see in general Delehaye 1966: 59–62. Vision: note the remarks of Prinzivalli 2001: 123.

11 Model: Bannon 1997. For the date of the *Acts of Phileas*, see Musurillo 1972: xlvii, and on the different versions, Lane Fox 1987: 434–5.

12 The Latin terms come respectively from the *Martyrdom of Marian and James* 1.2 (cf. 11.1: Agapius loved Tertulla and Antonia like children [*ad uicem pignerum*]); and the *Martyrdom of Montanus and Lucius* 11.6.

13 *Acts of Carpus, Papylus, and Agathonicê* A 42–47; B 6.1–5. For the date, see Barnes 1968: 514–15; cf. Musurillo 1972: xv, preferring the second century. On the documents in general, see Delehaye 1966: 99–102. Tampered: Barnes 1968: 527; cf. 514: 'The Latin version … seems to have been revised in the interests of orthodoxy'; cf. Bowersock 1995: 39, and note *Martyrdom of Polycarp* 4, for the discountenancing of voluntary martyrdom.

14 Droge and Tabor 1992: 138 implausibly suggest that Agathonicê was not a Christian but 'a pagan onlooker, who was sparked off by the sight of Carpus's death.'

15 Demographic regime: high infant and child mortality is a standard assumption of all modern reconstructions of Roman demography, for a summary account of which see Frier 2000. Responses: Bradley 1986: 216–19, for appropriate illustrations. Rejoicing: it is not obvious from the Maccabean sources (above n. 6)

that the Mother of the Maccabees rejoiced in the deaths of her sons as implied by the text quoted here. She is perhaps more analogous to the Spartan women who are credited by Plutarch *(Mor*. 240F, 241A, 241B, 241C, 242A, 242B) with phlegmatic statements of patriotic acceptance, resignation, or pride when informed of their sons' deaths in battle. Comparable case: *Acts of Maximilian* (quotation: 3.5), for the date of which, Musurillo 1972: xxxvii; cf. in general Delehaye 1966: 77–81. Mother: *Martyrdom of Montanus and Lucius* 16.3–6 (cf. Delehaye 1966: 55–9).

16 *Acts of Carpus, Papylus, and Agathonicê* A 28; B 3.2; *Martyrdom of Irenaeus* 4.5–6 (for the date, Musurillo 1972: xliii); *Acts of Phileas* A 143–5; B 3.3. It is notable that the question is asked of three men as well as of Agathonicê. Similar family questions are asked of the martyrs Perpetua and Felicitas, but not of their male companions, in the *Acta* (I 4–5) that derive from the *Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas* (for which see Amat 1996), where the redactor has inserted a trial protocol not found in the *Martyrdom* itself (the questions do not appear, however, in *Acta* II 4–5). Shaw 1993: 34–6 attributes the questions in the *Acta* to a concern on the part of a male redactor to supply appropriately gendered (and demeaning) questions to women, suggesting that family matters were more suitable a subject of enquiry of women than of men. A concern of this kind presumably did not present itself to the redactors of the three examples collocated here. For the date of the *Acta*, not before the fifth century, see Amat 1996: 269–71.

17 *Acts of Carpus, Papylus, and Agathonicê* A 29–32; B 3.2–3.

18 *Martyrdom of Irenaeus* 3.1–2 (reading *uxor*); 4.5, 4.6–7, 4.8.

19 Threat: *Martyrdom of Irenaeus* 3.3. The notion was widespread: *Martyrdom of Polycarp* 2.3, 11.2; *Acts of Carpus, Papylus, and Aganothicê* A 7, B 5; *Acts of Justin and Companions* C 2.1, cf. C 4.6; *Letter of the Churches of Lyons and Vienne* 1.26; *Martyrdom of Pionius* 4.24, 7.4; *Martyrdom of Montanus and Lucius* 11.7; *Martyrdom of Julius the Veteran* 3.4; *Martyrdom of Crispina* 2.2, 3.2. Aemilius Paullus: Plut. *Aemilius* 6.5; Fabius Maximus: Plut. *Fabius Maximus* 24.4. Hierax: *Acts of Justin and Companions* B 4.8. Eutychia: *Martyrdom of Agapê, Irenê, Chionê, and Companions* 3.5–7, 4.4 (for the date, Musurillo 1972: xliii). As with family language, appropriation of the language of slavery by early Christians to characterize their relationship with God was common, as many examples in the martyr acts themselves demonstrate: for background and Greek and Jewish precedents, see Pleket 1981; Hilhorst 1989. For the Roman legal texts showing postponement of execution of a pregnant condemned woman, see Quasten 1941.

20 *Acts of Phileas* B 3.3, 6.1, 6.4. Blandina: *Letter of the Churches of Lyons and Vienne* 1.55 (for the date of which, see Barnes 1968: 518–19; Musurillo 1972: xx). Quartillosa: *Martyrdom of Montanus and Lucius* 8.1–2.

21 The *Martyrdom* exists in a Latin and a Greek version, of which the Latin is probably the earlier: Amat 1996: 51–66. On the date, see Barnes 1968: 522; Musurillo 1972: xxvi–xxvii; Birley 1992: 46; Barnes 1985: 263–5. For a summary of bibliography, with particular reference to European scholarship, see Prinzivalli 2001: 221–5 (especially useful on the history of the text and its authorship, the interpretation of Perpetua's visions recorded in the *Martyrdom*, the possibility of Montanist influence, and structure; see also on these issues the introduction to Amat 1996, and cf. Delehaye 1966: 49–52). Fanaticism: on the related emergence of physical endurance as a means to demonstrate Christian resistance, see Shaw 1996.

22 On the family details, see *Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas* 2.1–3, 5.3, 7.5. Birley 1992: 46 states that Perpetua's family was Greek. Husband: various theories have been propounded to explain his absence from the record, such as early death or withdrawal from Perpetua at the time of her arrest; Shaw 1993: 24–5 gives an elaborate theory; cf. Amat 1996: 31; Bremmer 2002: 86–95 covers possibilities carpingly; Osiek 2002 suggests that Perpetua's fellow martyr Saturus was Perpetua's husband (but he is never identified as such and the suggestion requires the audience of the *Martyrdom* to be already familiar with the fact). Felicitas: it is often assumed that she was Perpetua's slave, or a slave belonging to Perpetua's family (e.g., Droge and Tabor 1992: 1; Miller 1994: 149), but the text does not specify this (cf. Amat 1996: 35; Osiek 2002: 287 n. 2). Brown 1988: 74 calls Perpetua 'already the head of a household in a small North African town' and possibly 'the mistress and protector of the group of Christians who had been arrested with her.' Similarly, Barnes 1985: 72 believes that all the martyrs here were 'members of a single household.' It may have included the possible slave woman of Punic name, Gudden, known to have been martyred a little later: Birley 1992: 51. Shaw 1993: 10–11 proposes that Perpetua's family was of decurial status; cf. Rives 1996: 22. Barnes 1985: 70 posits senatorial status (surely optimistically). On Perpetua and Apuleius's *Metamorphoses*, see Dronke 1984: 14, 285–6, confidently but I think erroneously taken as fact by Salisbury 1997: 46 (though Shaw 1993: 9 believes that an educated Perpetua would have been familiar with ancient novels). See the Endnote. Journal: Perpetua's own words are introduced by the redactor at 2.3, and they extend from 3.1 to 10.15; they are commonly taken to be authentic (e.g., Dodds 1970: 47–53; Barnes 1985: 263; Shaw 1993: 22; Amat 1996: 70–3), and may originally have been written in Greek (Robert 1989: 816–19; Lane Fox 1987: 469; Bowersock 1995: 34–5). Dronke 1984: 1–16 offers an imaginative analysis of the journal, speculating that Perpetua's dreams recorded there are again authentically recounted (cf. Shaw 1993: 26; Amat 1996: 38–50; Prinzivalli 2001: 127–8): they functioned as vehicles for the release of tensions provoked not least by family ties and the desire for martyrdom. For a strongly feminist view of Perpetua's dreams, and

the journal as a whole, see Miller 1994: 148–83. Harris 2009: 110–13, 280 is sceptical but in two minds. On Hilarianus, see Barnes 1968: 163, and esp. Birley 1992: 46–51, with *AE* 1968. 228 (Asturica): 'dis deabusque quos ius fasque est precari in pantheo,' etc. (for the welfare of Commodus).

23 *Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas* 5.2, 3.1–3. Effrontery: cf. Prinzivalli 2001: 121.

24 *Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas* 5.6, 2.2. Family: cf. Amat 1996: 31. Dronke 1984: 10 believes only Perpetua and her catechumen brother to have been Christians, the other family members, the father apart, being 'Christian sympathizers'; there is no obvious basis for this view in the *Martyrdom*. Conflict: cf. Prinzivalli 2001: 125. Perkins 1995: 104–23 emphasizes the role of the *Martyrdom* in challenging conventional structures of power at large, but without considering how non-Christian and Christian audiences might have responded differently to the challenge.

25 *Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas* 5.3; cf. Prinzivalli 2001: 120; and note also Tilley 1995, arguing for the transformation through faith of Perpetua (as also of Felicitas) from a state of social repression to one of fearlessness.

26 *Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas* 6.2, 6.3–4, 6.5. On beating as a traditional punishment for slaves, see Garnsey 1970: 136–41.

27 *Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas* 9.2–3. Cf. Shaw 1993: 4 on Perpetua's unconventional behaviour. Perpetua recorded in her journal her belief that the brother who had died as a child from disease was relieved of his suffering in the afterlife through her prayers (*Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas* 7–8), which could be taken to show a certain family devotion, but which hardly offsets the main events.

28 *Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas* 2.2, 3.6, 3.8–9, 6.7–8 (note that Perpetua's father already had the son in his care by the time of the third encounter: 6.2). It is remarkable that Perpetua never mentions the child after her sentence has been passed: he does not figure in the remainder of the *Martyrdom*. Cf. Prinzivalli 2001: 126: 'Although in the eyes of her Christian brethren, the indirect sacrifice of a child might possibly have found religious justification, such an attitude was incomprehensible to the pagan society surrounding her.' Meeks 1986: 22 seems to me to misrepresent the text (6.8) in stating, 'Only when Perpetua's anxiety about the safety of her infant son has been satisfied does she gain strength for her ordeal.' On infant exposure, see Harris 1994.

29 *Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas* 15.1–5; 15.7; 18.3. A milder view is taken of Felicitas and Perpetua as mothers by Nathan 2000: 51. On slave families, see Bradley 1987: 47–80.

30 On the public and spectacular character of martyrdom, and the problems it raised for both Christians themselves and the Roman authorities, see Potter

1993; cf. Lane Fox 1987: 420; and for the wider context, Hopkins 1983: 1–30; Coleman 1990. Observe Bowersock 1995: 66: 'It was probably through martyrdom that many pagans became aware of Christianity in the first place during the second and third centuries.' Not all trials were public: for hearings *in secretario* or *in consistorio* see *Acts of the Scillitan Martyrs* 1.1; *Acts of Cyprian* 1.1; *Acts of Marcellus* A 1.2; and *Martyrdom of Crispina* 1.1.

31 Cf. the impassioned statement of Harnack 1966: 393: 'How deeply must conversion have driven its wedge into marriage and domestic life! What an amount of strain, dispeace, and estrangement conversion must have produced, if one member was a Christian while another clung to the old religion!'

32 *Martyrdom of Irenaeus* 3.2 (*domestici*); *Acts of Justin and Companions* B 4.3; C 3.4 (Euelpistus was or had been an imperial slave; he was tried in Rome, but originally came from Cappadocia and had Christian parents [B 4.7]; Hierax, one of his companions in death, was perhaps also a slave; he says that he had been 'dragged off from Iconium in Phrygia' [B 4.8], and may have been a victim of the slave trade); *Letter of the Churches of Lyons and Vienne* 1.18 (Blandina had a Christian mistress), 1.20 (Sanctus refuses to say whether he was a slave or a freedman); cf. *Martyrdom of Fructuosus and Companions* 3.4 (the bishop's *lector*, usually a slave; note that the daughter of the governor who tried the bishop Fructuosus had two Christian slaves in her *familia*); *Letter of the Churches of Lyons and Vienne* 1.14 (pagan slaves who informed on the Christian owners under interrogation); *Martyrdom of Pionius* 9.4 (Sabina: she was not originally from Smyrna, the site of Pionius's trial [18.7]; on the probably independent identification of Politta and the threat women of her kind represented to Christian slaves, see Lane Fox 1987: 463–5; and on the date of the document, Lane Fox 1987: 465–8). On slavery and Christianity at large, see Glancy 2002. The case: Ste Croix 1975 (= 2006: chap. 7); cf. Garnsey 1996: 173–88 (on Paul).

33 Exemplary character: cf. also *Letter of Phileas* B 2 (Rufinus). Emulative effect: cf. *Martyrdom of Polycarp* 17.3, 18.3, 19.1; *Martyrdom of Marian and James* 3.5. On the disproportionate contrast between the small numbers of Christian martyrs and the impact of their deaths on both other Christians and pagans, see Stark 1996: 163–89.

34 Auden: Auden 1989: 46.

7 Apuleius and Carthage

1 On the dating of the *Florida*, see Hunink 2001: 18; Lee 2005: 12–13; cf. Harrison 2000: 7–8. I assume that the extracts concerned represent speeches of a type actually made by Apuleius in his own voice, some of which (at least) were recorded at the time of delivery by stenographers; see *Flor*. 9.13 (reading

exceptum [Vallette]; contrast Hunink 2001: 109–10; cf. 2000b, *excerptum* [chap. 1 n. 19]), with Hilton in Harrison, Hilton, and Hunink 2001: 125–7; cf. Fantham 1996: 259–62.

2 Conventionally: see, solely *exempli gratia*, Dickey 2002, surveying a range of Latin authors from Plautus to Apuleius and duly acknowledging the importance of the development of the Latin language over time for its subject, but neglecting place, the subject of concern here, as a variable which might have value for explaining how Apuleius and other authors expressed themselves and how their works might be understood; cf. Winkler 1985, Schlam 1992, Shumate 1996, Sandy 1997, Harrison 2000, Hunink 2001, Krabbe 2003; contrast Finkelpearl 1998: 131–44, for the view that a North African tradition may have influenced Apuleius's presentation of Charite in the *Metamorphoses*. Gallagher and Greenblatt 2000 and Greenblatt 2004 offer what seem to me productive models for understanding literary texts.

3 For the outline of Apuleius's biography, see Sandy 1997: 1–41, Harrison 2000: 1–10, Lee 2005: 4–6; and for intriguing speculation on Apuleius in Rome and Italy in particular, see Coarelli 1989. On *doctrina* in the *Apology*, see chap. 1; contrast Miles 2003: 134.

4 Mainstream: Harrison 2000: 2. Apuleius and the Latin tradition: Finkelpearl 1998. Difficult to define: see chap. 1 n. 19. It might be a question whether there could be a Second Sophistic at all had Philostratus's *Lives of the Sophists* not survived. For the relatively few Greek sophists attested independently from inscriptions, see Puech 2002. Archaism: e.g., Harrison 2000: 87–8, 123; cf. Sandy 1997: 174; Hunink 2001: 16–17, 62; Lee 2005: 24–5.

5 Inscription: *IPT* 24; *IRT* 322; cf. 321, 323.6. See Supplement no. 4.

6 The story is well known from other sources, for which see Stewart 1993: 360–2 (cf. 28, 38); Lee 2005: 88. Polycletus (Polyclitus of Argos) is a variant for Lysippus; cf. Hunink 2001: 96–7; Lee 2005: 91.

7 Plausibly: Harrison 2000: 104; cf. Hunink 2001: 94; Lee 2005: 89. Elder Pliny: cf. Harrison 2000: 104, proposing also a connection with a passage in Horace (*Ep.* 2.1.239–41); cf. Hunink 2001: 96; Lee 2005: 123–5. Educator: Opeku 1993 suggests that Apuleius was a formal teacher; but I know of no evidence to prove this.

8 Commentators: Harrison 2000: 112; Hunink 2001: 127–8. Improbable: two Latin poems perhaps to take into account are Ov. *Am*. 2.6 and Stat. *Silv*. 2.4, on which see respectively Myers 1990 and Van Dam 1984: 336–7.

9 *Flor*. 15.14–21, too lengthy to quote in full on Pythagoras's *doctores*; the quoted sections above are from 15.14: *Zoroastren, omnis diuini arcani antistitem*; 17: *Chaldaei sideralem scientiam, numinum uagantium statos ambitus, utrorumque uarios effectus in genituris hominum ostendere nec non medendi remedia mortalibus latis pecuniis terra caeloque et mari conquisita*; 18: *Bracmani*

autem pleraque philosophiae eius contulerunt, quae mentium documenta, quae corporum exercitamenta, quot partes animi, quot uices uitae, quae diis manibus pro merito suo cuique tormenta uel praemia.

10 Legendary: MacMullen 1966a: 96–9. Interest: Harrison 2000: 115. Ambiguous term: MacMullen 1966a: 109–27; cf. Rives 2010. Oea: on Apuleius as a troubling presence there, see chap. 2.

11 Example: Blanchard-Lemée, Ennaïffer, Slim, and Slim 1996: 212, fig. 157 (description: 208, 291); the mosaic is from the early fourth century, but this does not affect the general question raised.

12 Year of office: see *Flor*. 9.39 for sensitivity to the short duration of the proconsulship, the beginning of which is disputed, but probably fell in the middle of April (Clarke 1972: 1053 n. 3; Lane Fox 1987: 487) rather than July (Lepelley 1994). Two individuals: *PIR*^{2} C 1230; C 1447; cf. Thomasson 1996: 66–7. Intimidating: *Flor.* 9.36. Marius Priscus: Plin. *Ep*. 2.11, 3.9, 6.29. Tribunals: *Flor*. 9.11–12. Such cities: Lepelley 1994 collects the evidence; on the assize system in general, see Burton 1975. Cohort: Bérard 1991, present in Carthage since the Flavians.

13 Institutions: *Flor.* 16.35, 40, 41, 44, 45, 46 (cf. 18.8); 16.43, 45; 16.38 (taken as the provincial priesthood: Fishwick 1987: III 2: 195–7; cf. Hunink 2001: 168; Lee 2005: 156); 18.15 (cf. 16.1, the senate or more likely the provincial assembly: Rives 1994: 283; Hunink 2001: 155, 169; Hilton in Harrison, Hilton, and Hunink 2001: 158 n. 79; cf. Fishwick 1987: I 257–8; Lee 2005: 149); see generally Debbasch 1953. Operation: Rickman 1980.

14 I depend heavily in this paragraph on Ros 1996a. For the possibility of an earlier Augustan theatre, acknowledged by Ros, see Rakob 2000: 75 (but not proven by Virg. *Aen*. 1.427–9). The Carthaginian theatre receives little archaeological attention from modern critics, though Lee 2005: 170 recognizes that Apuleius is speaking of 'a real object in the sight of both Apuleius and his audience.' Hunink (2001: 183) notes that Apuleius's references to a roof and ceiling concern features within, not over, the theatre, but his suggestion that the Carthaginian Odeum might be the site of Apuleius's speech overlooks the point that this was a third-century structure. It is often assumed (e.g., Thomas 2007: 218) that the *Florida* comprise extracts from speeches that were all made at Carthage, but this cannot be certain.

15 Carthage: Lancel 1979; Wightman 1980; Gros 1990; Deneauve 1990; cf. Mattingly and Hitchner 1995: 182–3. Population: Lézine 1962; Duncan-Jones 1974: 67 n. 3, 260 n. 4.

16 Circus: Humphrey 1986: 296–306; Norman 1988. Amphitheatre: Lachaux 1968: 55–8; Golvin 1988: I 122–3, 199–200; Bomgardner 1989; 1993: 380–1. Claimed: cf. Herodian 7.6.1. Note that the library mentioned by Apuleius is not securely identified in the archaeological record, but the connection with pre-Roman

collections of books made by Sandy 1997: 18 on the basis of Plin. *HN* 18.22 should probably be amended.

17 Building program: Gros 1990; Deneauve 1990. Emperor: *HA Pius* 9.2; Paus. 8.43.4; Vict. *Caes*. 16.12. Antoninus Pius and Carthage: Thomas 2007: 142–6, 161: 'the reconstruction of Carthage was symbolically important to Antoninus Pius.' On the intrusive character of the Augustan foundation, see Rakob 2000. Dominance: Tac. *Ann*. 14.31.

18 Q. Voltedius: *ILS* 9406 (= *ILAfr*. 390), with Bassignano 1974: 117–18; Duncan-Jones 1974: 67–8, 104. Christians: for some examples, see chap. 6. Mosaics: Dunbabin 1978: 65–87.

19 Proprietary phrase: a clear statement of identification with Carthage and Carthaginians (cf. *Flor*. 6.1, *nobis*), and rather more, I think, than 'a reference to contemporaneous Roman culture' (Hunink 2000a: 82). For the strict meaning of *munera* as gladiatorial contests, see Edmondson 1996. Gambling: Hopkins 1983: 25–6; Toner 1995: 92–4. Mosaics: Dunbabin 1978: 88–108.

20 *Defixiones: DT* 213–61, 303; Jordan 1985: 184–5, 1988, 1996; see esp. Mura 1994 (26 of 60 Carthaginian examples dealing with charioteers, gladiators, and *uenatores*); cf. Heintz 1998. Quotation: *DT* 237 (= Gager 1992 no. 9). Terracotta plaque: Vogel 1969: 156 with fig. 11. Statues: Norman and Haeckl 1993: 238–42, with figs. 2a–c, a statue of early third-century date found in 1981.

21 Religious life: in general, Rives 1995 with Lassère 1996. Caelestis and Saturn: Lancel 1995: 431–6. Sanctuary of Tanit: the archaeology of her sanctuary at Carthage shows a close correlation between original Punic and later Roman forms of worship, from which it has been inferred that there was little change over time in the manner in which the local goddess was celebrated and conceptualized by most Carthaginians, despite the use of the Latin name; see Hurst 1999; cf. Rives 1995: 168, postulating revival of the cult of Caelestis rather than continuity; Ben Abdallah and Ennabli 1998. On Caelestis see Halsberghe 1984; Bullo 1994. Inscription: Leglay 1961: 15 no. 4. Suggestion: Rives 1995: 153–69. On the priests of the Cereres, see Gascou 1987.

22 Indication enough: for this and what follows, see Adams 2003: 200–1, 207–9, 213–45 (cf. Lancel 1995: 436–8: Punic surviving well beyond the sixth century), with Millar 1968, a fundamental study. Libyan names: Frézouls 1989.

23 Romanization: principal studies include Benabou 1976, Millet 1990, Woolf 1998, MacMullen 2000, Scott and Webster 2003, Mattingly 2004.

24 Certain site: Hunink 2001: 18; Lee 2005: 5–6. Quotations: *Flor*. 2.3 (Plautus), 3.3 (Virgil), 10.1 (Accius), 11.2 (Virgil), 16.33 (Virgil), 17.15 (Virgil), 18.6 (Plautus), 21.4 (Lucilius).

25 Marsyas: Rawson 1987. Apollo and Marsyas in a mosaic from El Djem in the Bardo Museum: Blanchard-Lemée, Ennaïfer, Slim, and Slim 1996: 230: fig. 171; cf. Dunbabin 1978: 147, 258; Rawson 1987: 37, 121–2. The contrast between

Apollo's sophistication and Marsyas's barbarism in *Flor*. 3 is taken by Finkelpearl 2009 to signify the complexity of Apuleius's own cultural identity. For Marsyas, on the other hand, as the inaugural surveyor of the heavens at the foundation of Rome, an image provincial cities adopted to indicate their connections to the metropolis, see Thomas 2007: 147–8. Philosophers: Zanker 1995.

26 Question: note Hunink 2001: 13, 14, the 'city elite in Carthage,' 'a much wider audience'; Sandy 1997: 86, 'mass audience.' Epitaphs: *CIL* VIII 646, 8500 (= *ILS* 7761); for other examples, see chap. 8, and cf. Zerbini 1994. Uneducated: cf. Kermode 2004: 76 on the audience of Shakespeare's Globe: of the 3000 likely to be attending 'it is a safe bet that 2,700 were not scholars.'

27 Artisans' quarter: Rakob 2000: 78. *Metamorphoses*: see chap. 5. Mosaics: Blanchard-Lemée, Ennaïfer, Slim, and Slim 1996: 45 (figs. 20, 21, 199), 57 (figs. 29a, 29b, 90), 122–3 (figs. 81, 82), 128 (figs. 81, 94), 162–3 (fig. 116), 170 (fig. 121), 173 (fig. 125), 177, 178–9 (fig. 132); cf. Dunbabin 1978: 109–30 on the degrees of realism portrayed; the variations of date in mosaic production should be noted, but do not affect my general point.

28 Comparable: cf. the rough parallel from Shakespeare's day: 'One must remember that the Elizabethan taste for plays was of a piece with a love for other public entertainments such as fencing, bear-baiting, and cock-fighting' (Kermode 2004: 110). Rivals: on the degree to which sophistic rivalry is evident in the *Florida*, see Sandy 1997: 164–9; Harrison 2000: 106. Statues: Hilton in Harrison, Hilton, and Hunink 2001: 158 n. 80, 162 n. 93.

29 Tertullian: see chap. 3.

30 Quotation: Syme 1984: 1324.

31 Madauros: Gsell and Joly 1922; Sherwin-White 1944: 9–10; *PECS* s.v. 'Madauros'; Février 1982: 325, 340–1, 394 fig. B.8; Gascou 1982: 163. M. Gabinius Sabinus: *ILAlg.* 2121–7. Augustine: *Conf.* 2.3.5; *Ep.* 17.2.

32 Inscriptions: *ILAlg.* 2056, 2070, 2130, 2131, 2145, 2207, 2240, *AE* 1922. no. 16; cf. Bassignano 1974: 273–84. M. Cornelius Victorinus: *ILAlg.* 2145. To judge from Augustine's vivid recollection of two statues of Mars in the forum (*Conf.* 2.3.5; cf. *Ep.* 17.2), the presence of the Roman gods was still much in evidence at a late date.

33 Apuleius's family: *Apol.* 23.1, 24.9. Cirta: Syme 1988: 286, 472.

34 On the surface area of Madauros see the references in n. 31; cf. Duncan-Jones 1974: 265 n. 4. Connected: Sherwin-White 1944: 9–10. Seating capacity: Gsell and Joly 1922; Lachaux 1968: 88–90. C. Apuleius Rogatus: *ILAlg.* 2276/7. L. Julius Zabo: *ILAlg.* 2547. Manilius Aris: *ILAlg.* 2601. Mizguar: *ILAlg.* 2624. Calculation: Thompson 1969. Severus: see Sznycer 2001: 47–50 on the stele now in Copenhagen found between Béja and Le Kef. The inscription is a dedication to Ba'al Ammon. Damio: *ILAlg.* 2036; Lilleus: *ILAlg.* 2053 (or Lilleo?)

(both names are followed by the element '*Aug.*'). Liber Pater: Jalloul Boussada 1991.

35 Strategy: Syme 1979: 218–30; Gascou 1972: 32–3. Platitude: Hunink 1997: II 83, though note Swain 1996: 46, 299 for Lucian's genuine sensitivity to his 'barbarian' origins.

36 Pliny: Bradley 2010a.

8 Appearing for the Defence

1 For details on Apuleius's trial, see chap. 1 and Hunink 1997 I 11–20.

2 *Apol.* 4–5.

3 Real world: Millar 1981. On the communicative function of dress in Roman culture at large, see Edmondson 2008. The feature of course is common in other societies. As a particular comparandum, an episode from Giuseppe di Lampesuda's brilliant novel *The Leopard* (1958), set in Sicily of the Risorgimento, may be appositely noted. Don Calogero Sadara, the mayor of Donnafugata, is the quintessential opportunistic bourgeois who achieves great wealth and rises to great power in the upheavals of revolution. His fortunes contrast markedly with those of His Excellency the Prince Don Fabrizio, a cultured aristocrat whose ancestral ways of life and feudal authority are coming to an end. He is as much a symbol of decline as the mayor is of ascent. The mayor, however, lacks breeding, and his clothes betray it. At a dinner party for local notables of inferior standing, the prince intends to avoid embarrassing his guests by not wearing the evening dress he would customarily wear, knowing that his guests will have nothing to match. He is shocked, however, and put at a disadvantage, when the social-climbing mayor is said to be arriving 'In *tails*!' Yet discomfort quickly disappears:

> Though perfectly adequate as a political demonstration, it was obvious that, as tailoring, Don Calogera's tail coat was a disastrous failure. The material was excellent, the style modern, but the cut quite appalling. The Word from London had been most inadequately made flesh by a tailor from Girgenti to whom Don Calogero had gone in his tenacious avarice. The tails of his coat pointed straight to heaven in mute supplication, his huge collar was shapeless, and, what is more, the Mayor's feet were shod in buttoned boots. (trans. A. Colquhoun)

Pretension and wealth are poor substitutes for refinement of taste and the dignity of deportment natural to the aristocrat, whose dress, always an expression of status, is a type of message easily understood by those of less esteem and under authority, but not necessarily well deployed when aspiring to rise above their station.

4 Beggar: cf. Whittaker 1993: 298. On the vocabulary of 'de-' and 're-formation' in the *Metamorphoses*, see Krabbe 2003: 57, 84 n. 12, and cf. chap. 2.

5 Hair: see also *Met*. 2.23, 2.30, 8.24, 9.31, 10.6, and on 2.8–9 the detailed comments in van Mal-Maeder 2001: 21–2, 159–82; cf. Englert and Long 1972/3. There were undoubtedly associations with magic. Finkelpearl 1998: 62–7 posits a connection between Apuleius's encomium and earlier Augustan, especially elegiac, poetry. Apuleian interest in dress appears also in *Flor*. 8.2, 9.15–23, 22.5.

6 Basilica, tour, assizes, *garum*: see chap. 1. Advisers (*consilium*): *Apol*. 1.1, 65.8, 67.5, 99.1. Herald, toga, tribunal: cf. *Flor*. 9.10 (especially *tribunal ascendit*). A herald is conspicuous in the trial of Lucius at the Festival of Risus in *Met*. 3.1–10. Statues: *Apol*. 85.2.

7 Bystanders: *Apol*. 55.12, 76.5, 98.2. Types: for the range of characters in the *Metamorphoses*, see chap. 5. Julius mosaic: Blanchard-Lemée, Ennaïffer, Slim, and Slim 1996: 167–72 (fig. 121); cf. Dunbabin 1978: 121. See Supplement no. 10. *Domina* mosaic: Blanchard-Lemée, Ennaïffer, Slim, and Slim 1996: 155 with fig. 116. (These mosaics belong to a later period, but this does not affect the general point made.) Fishermen: Dunbabin 1978: 125–30 with plate XLVIII nos. 119, 120; plate XLIX nos. 123, 124; Blanchard-Lemée, Ennaïffer, Slim, and Slim 1996: 128 with fig. 81.

8 On the question of publication, see chap. 1 n. 19 and the summary remarks of Hunink 1997: I 25. Artifice: to be expected in any courtroom text: Gotoff 1993.

9 Greek sophists: see for various contemporary approaches Bowersock 1969; Bowie 1982; Anderson 1993; Brunt 1994; Swain 1996; Whitmarsh 2001, 2005. Philostratus apart, evidence for practitioners depends on occasional commemorations of men described epigraphically as sophists, collected in Puech 2002. Note as one who prided himself on his long hair, Flavius Amphicles (*PIR*^{2} F 201; Puech 2002: 48).

10 While sophistic influence on Apuleius is commonly understood, to label him a 'professed sophist' (Hunink 1997: I 26) seems an exaggeration to me. Quotation: Syme 1988: 681. Apuleius in Athens: Sandy 1993. P. Hordeonius Lollianus: *PIR*^{2} H 203; Stephens and Winkler 1995: 316; Puech 2002: 327–30. Symbolizes: cf. Jones 1980: 253–4. Favorinus and Aelian: Philost. *VS* 489, 624.

11 Odeion: Travlos 1971: 365–77; Shear 1981: 361. Agora of Caesar and Augustus: Travlos 1971: 28–36; Shear 1981: 358–61; Boatwright 1983. Library: Shear 1981: 374–6. Streets: Shear 1981: 368. Basilica: Shear 1981: 376; Boatwright 1983: 176; Spawforth and Walker 1985: 97–8. Temple: Travlos 1971: 494–6; Agrippa monument: Travlos 1971: 483, 493; cf. Alcock 1993: 197. Statues: note Alcock 1993: 181: 'a veritable forest of at least 136 Hadrians.' On the eastern spread of Roman architectural forms, see Thomas 2007: 81–90. On Hadrian's buildings in Athens, see Spawforth and Walker 1985: 98–100; Boatwright 2000a: chap. 7. Pausanias: the first book of his *Description of Greece* expresses a sense of

wonder inspired in the visitor to Athens ca. 150 by its ancient monuments and wonders; on the date of composition, see Paus. 7.20.6 with Habicht 1985: 10–11; cf. Geagan 1979: 401–2; Swain 1996: 330; Bowie 2001: 21 (ca. 160); on Pausanias and Athens at large, see Arafat 1996: 164–83. But Athens was not simply a museum (Swain 1996: 74). Altars: Benjamin 1963. Inscriptions: *IG* III 401–2 (= Smallwood 1966: no. 485). Arch: Travlos 1971: 253–7; Adams 1989; Alcock 1993: 184; Arafat 1996: 178–81.

12 Contemporary portrait sculpture: Zanker 1995: 235–42. Honoured: *ILAlg.* 2115, commonly taken to refer to Apuleius. Augustine: *De ciu. D.* 9 passim.

13 Mummy portraits: Doxiadis 1995: 23–4 (nos. 17–19), 188–9; 110 (no. 79), 209; 174 (no. 112), 222; Walker and Bierbrier 1997: 95–7 (nos. 87, 88), commenting on the influence of the hairstyle of Lucius Verus. On effeminacy and sophists see Gleason 1995: 55–81, with her reference (7) to Polemo's (probable) description of Favorinus (especially 'He took great care of his abundant tresses, rubbed ointments on his body, and cultivated everything that excites the desire for coitus and lust').

14 Appeals: see chap. 1. Allusions: Finkelpearl 1998.

15 On body language, not quite in the modern colloquial sense, note Fantham 2004: 296: 'deliberate use of the body.'

16 On Quintilian's theory of rhetorical performance, including his debt to Cicero, see Fantham 1982; cf. as a modern theoretical approach to Roman theory, Gunderson 2000: 70–2.

17 Like-minded philosopher: see chap. 1. Cicero's line: cf. Finkelpearl 1998: 51–3. This is not to suggest, however, that Apuleius was a 'rhetorician' (Gleason 1995: 8 n. 29). For the link with the Republican orators, cf. Hunink 1997: II 231.

18 For detailed information on the orators listed, see Sumner 1973.

19 Cf. chap. 7. Also to be noticed is the Julia Paula commemorated at Ammaedara who died at the age of sixteen. Her epitaph reads: *omnes uicisti specie doctrina puellas* (*ILAfr.* 158). Educational opportunities for young women may have been circumscribed, but Pudentilla will be kept in mind; see de Marre 2004.

20 On Pliny's studious friends, see Sherwin-White 1966: 65–9; cf. Bradley 2010a.

21 For important modern works on Romanization, see chap. 7 n. 23. Linguistic and religious evidence: above, chaps. 1, 2, 7.

22 On social norms in the *Metamorphoses*, see chap. 5. Fellow students: Harrison 2000: 39 takes the son as Apuleius's protégé. Greek: Kotula 1969; cf. Adams 2003: 220–1.

23 Outsider: see chap. 3. For recent discussions of the Festival of Risus, see Finkelpearl's summary in Schlam and Finkelpearl 2000: 154–7 (I am very grateful to Ellen Finkelpearl for a copy of this invaluable publication). Envy: as may be gathered from a strange scene on a mosaic from El Djem (Ben Abed-Ben Khaler 2006: 134–5, pl. 3; cf. 59), in which the superior night owl, the bird

of wisdom whose contorted song Apuleius knew (*Flor*. 13.1, 2), clothed in the Roman toga as if in orator's pose, makes lesser birds drop dead from jealousy: *inuidia rumpuntur aues neque noctua curat*.

9 Apuleius and the Sub-Saharan Slave Trade

1 Translation of *Apol*. 16: Hunink in Harrison, Hilton, and Hunink 2001: 40–1, slightly modified to bring out the literalism of *albus an ater*; cf. Vallette 1971: 21, 'si tu étais blanc ou noir.' On Apuleius's use of the word *barbarus*, derogatory but ambiguously associated with magic, see Baldini Moscadi 2001.

2 Commentators: Hunink 1997: II 66 on *Apol*. 16.19: 'a proverbial expression,' closely following Butler and Owen 1914: 47; see Merrill 1893: 209 and Fordyce 1961: 382 on Catullus; cf. Quinn 1970: 430: 'apparently proverbial.' Note also Snowden 1970: 260 n. 16.

3 Associations: Thompson 1989: 110–13. Christian: e.g., Jerome, *Ep*. 22.1; Auson. *Par*. 5.5.

4 Black fowler: Desanges 1976: 262 fig. 355; camel drivers: Desanges 1976: 249 fig. 340; bath worker: Desanges 1976: 258 fig. 347. African boy: Snowden 1976: 224 fig. 290 – see Supplement no. 12; bath worker: Snowden 1976: 220 fig. 284 – see Supplement no. 12; seated youth: Snowden 1976: 235 fig. 324 – see Supplement no. 13. The collection of items in *The Image of the Black* is not complete and is not intended to be; for further examples see George 2003, important throughout.

5 For the minimalist view, see Desanges 1976; cf. Isaac 2004: 49: 'Blacks were considered remarkable, but few of them lived among the Greeks and Romans and no country inhabited by blacks was ever part of the Greek and Roman empires'; and from a different perspective Wright 2007: 12–13, 16, without consideration of the evidence of art. For the counter view, see Snowden 1976; 1970: 217: 'The Ethiopian was no rarity among classical peoples.' George 2003 stresses the exotic character of black Africans in art.

6 Banquet scene: Dunbabin 2003: 58–9 with fig. 28 (not included in Snowden 1976). Sexual partner: Clarke 2003: 242 (with pl. 21). Terracotta lamp: Walker and Higgs 2001: 90 no. 98; cf. Zanker and Ewald 2004: 140 no. 122, a detail from a sarcophagus in the Vatican dated to ca. 220 showing a drunken Dionysus leaning on a satyr. On Apuleius as a connoisseur of art, there seems to be some confirmation in Elsner's discussion of artistic descriptions in the *Metamorphoses* (Elsner 2007: 289–302), but I confess to having difficulty in understanding statements of this kind: 'It is as if in the ritual visuality of the sacred (whether one takes Apuleius as sincere or mocking or both), the worshipper is himself reconstituted as image in a divine dispensation that thereby allows the initiate to confront the gods not merely through their images but face to face' (Elsner 2007: 298, on *Met*. 11.24).

7 See Rostovtzeff 1957: 337–8, 66, 154; cf. Cary 1949: 219–20, citing Athenaeus 2.44e on Mago as evidence of a Carthaginian route across the desert. For the negative argument, Desanges 1976, 1979 (cf. Bovill 1968: 28–44). Di Vita 1982: 588–94, with full bibliography, argues from conventional sources in favour of a substantial trade against Desanges; cf. Mattingly 1995: 155–7. Daniels 1970: 44 was doubtful about its extent. The issue is not considered by Garrido-Hory 1998, though raised by the importance placed on Martial 6.39 as evidence of the Negroid type. George 2003 sees a strong connection between blacks in art and Egypt. Trade: on freedom and slavery, see Bradley 2010b.

8 Islamic demand: McCormick 2001: 244–54, 733–77. Description of routes: Lovejoy 2000: 25, with map 1; cf. Wright 2001.

9 Variations: cf. Mattingly 2003a: 98, with fig. 3.9 (93). Garamantian Road: Wright 2007: 15, 29 (on its survival of two thousand years). Prime source: Desanges 1976, 1979. Innovation: Davis 1984: 8, 2001: 141; Wright 2007: 17.

10 This paragraph and the next do no more than briefly summarize material from Mattingly 2001, 2002, 2003a: chap. 3, and Liverani 2000a, 2000b; cf. Wright 2007: 13–14. Mattingly 2002: 196–7 hesitates about the 'selling-on' of slaves captured by the Garamantes ('Ethiopians' included), but emphasizes the attractiveness of the cities of Roman Tripolitania as outlets of trans-Saharan trade in the high imperial period. Gaetulia: see Butler and Owen 1914: 64. Burials and tombs: Mattingly 2007. Note that the Garamantes do not appear in the index of names and subjects in Hunink 1997.

11 For the presence of the Garamantes in southern Fezzan and archaeological evidence of Roman contacts, see esp. Edwards 2001. For travel conditions in the early mediaeval period, Wright 2007: 34–5.

12 Military campaigns: Romanelli 1979: 90–3. Herms: Snowden 1970: 142. Development: cf. Law 1967.

13 Sources in Hunwick and Powell 2002.

14 The fourth edition of Daumas's book was published in 1860. The incidents described summarize the extracts in Hunwick and Powell 2002: 57–64, 71–81; quotations: 62, 71–2.

15 On Gagliuffi and his records, see Wright 1998 (quotations: 93); 2007: 69–88; cf. Wright 2007: 101–2 on the report of the mid-nineteenth-century traveller and opponent of slavery James Richardson, recording among other items, 'That slaves were flogged to death *en route* from Ghat to Tripoli and others were over-driven or starved to death; That the youngest female child was violated by her brutal captors or masters *en route* from Bornou to Ghat and Fezzan by the Tibboos; That slave children of five years of age walk more than one hundred and thirty days over the Great Desert, and through other districts of Africa, before they can reach the slave market of Tripoli to be sold.'

16 Numbers: Lovejoy 2000: 25, 61, 152–3; Wright 2007: 38–40, 52. Total exports: Lovejoy 2000: 142; Wright 2007: 167–8. Tripoli: F.W. Beechey and H.W. Beechey, *Proceedings of the Expedition to Explore the Northern Coast of Africa, From Tripoly Eastward in MDCCCXXI and MDCCCXXII, Comprehending an Account of the Greater Syrtis and Cyrenaica, And of the Ancient Cities Composing the Pentapolis* (London, 1828) (quotation: 22–3); Wright 2007: 127–36. Abolitionist: for a riveting account, see Hochschild 2005. The latest survey known to me is Drescher 2009.

17 Ghadames: Merighi 1940: I 166–70; II 207–8; Wright 2007: 30, 89–96. Griga: see Hunwick and Powell 2002: 199–219 (quotation: 205). Description: Anonymous: 52.

18 Lepcis: Branconi 2005. Trümper 2009: 62–7 doubts that the building was specifically intended as a slave market, but this does not mean that sales of slaves did not occur there. Zarai tariff: *CIL* VIII 4508 (note Charlesworth 1926: 147: 'doubtless prisoners of the desert,' and see Trousset 2002–3); cf. also *Expos. tot. mund. et gent*. 60 (Mauretania). Palmyra: Matthews 1984; Young 2001 omits slaves as an item of long-distance trade in the eastern Mediterranean. Ostraca: Mattingly 1995: 156 (cf. 95–7). Ghirza: Brogan and Smith 1984: 220, with plates 67b and 110b; Mattingly 1995: 151 (cf. 197–200), suggesting that the camel trains were used for moving local produce to market. Apuleius, incidentally, knew the difference between the Bactrian camel and the dromedary: *Met*. 7.14. Detachment: Mattingly 1995: 85. Some slaves may have been acquired as captives following Roman military campaigns, on which see Bradley 2004.

19 Ostia: Meiggs 1973: 283–8; cf. Scullard 1974: 253–4 on the trade in elephants for display in games, in both North Africa and Italy. The consecration of Hadrian's wife Sabina was observed in 138 by the *Sabrathe[nses] ex Af[rica*] (Smallwood 1966: no. 145b), perhaps the traders from Ostia if not representatives directly from the city. Grain trade: Rickman 1980: 69. Elias: McCormick 2001: 244–54, 769. Figurine: Snowden 1970: 224–5, fig. 82.

20 Zliten mosaics: Aurigemma 1960: plates 123–5 (rural scenes), 137–59 (gladiators); Dunbabin 1978: plates XX (gladiators), XXXVI nos. 95, 96 (rural scenes). Pavis d'Escurac 1974: 91 shows the mosaic of the seated woman in her discussion of the *Apology*.

21 Pudentilla: I think it likely that Apuleius's description of her farming interests is realistic and not the result of a literary topos (Stone 1998). It also seems to me indisputable that the Zliten mosaics must illuminate her world. On the transportation of animals, see Jennison 1937: 137–53. Local gods: see Lengrand 1998, a study of 82 dedications to gods from slaves and former slaves (32 in the emperor's service), showing a tendency to honour local divinities. Rural markets: controversy exists over the extent to which rural markets were regulated by Roman government, but the only relevant point here is that markets

themselves were regular affairs at which slave sales might be expected; see Shaw 1981; Zelener 2000: 223–35; de Ligt 2000: 237–52; Chaouli 2002–3. Pepper pot: as represented by an item in the British Museum from the third-century Chaourse Hoard (Snowden 1970: fig. 57).

10 Apuleius and Jesus

1 For remarks on the rhetorical and literary aspects of *Apol*. 42–7, see Hunink 1997 II 126–44. On the question of revision, see above chap. 1 n. 19. On Apuleius's trial, see with references chaps. 1, 3, 8.
2 On boys and divination, see Ogden 2001: 196–201. Commonly: cf. for example, the similar questions of the *Sortes Astrampsychi*.
3 The Greek magical papyri are most easily accessible in English translation in Betz 1992. For this example, see Betz 1992: 236–7.
4 Aasgard 2009 discusses some of the topics considered here in arguing, with the authority of a rich history of textual research in support, that the *Infancy Gospel* had its origin as a set of children's stories.
5 For the content, translation, and technical details of the *Infancy Gospel* and related texts, I rely on Elliott 1993: 68–83, 100–7 (an outstanding edition), with especially Gero 1971; see also Gero 1988 and Koestler 1990: 311–14. On the importance of oral tradition in early Christian culture, see Dunn 2005; the biographical form of the Gospels identified by Burridge 2005 seems to me to have little in common with classical biographical forms. For the uncertainty of the dates of composition of the canonical Gospels, see Burridge 2005 and Hengel 2005 (late first/early second century).
6 Quotation: Elliott 1993: 68. I am not convinced that the *Infancy Gospel* shows a 'typical encomiastic element of ancient biography' (Horn and Martens 2009: 130).
7 *PGM* IV 1227–64 (Betz 1992: 62); cf. IV 3007–86 (Betz 1992: 96); XII 190–2 (Betz 1992: 160). The modern mythology of Jesus's childhood is encapsulated in Cecil Frances Alexander's Christmas carol *Once in Royal David's City*, and in poems such as William Blake's *The Lamb*.
8 See chap. 6 on Apuleius and his knowledge of Christians. For views on whether *Met*. 9.14 refers to a Christian or a Jew, see Schlam and Finkelpearl 2000: 95–8. For Christianity in second-century North Africa, Frend 1984: 162–92 and Barnes 1971: 60–84; for the Scillitan martyrs, Barnes 1968: 519–20 and Birley 1992: 37–40 (esp. on P. Vigellius Saturninus). For the archaeological evidence on the Jewish cemetery at Carthage, not accepted by all, see Frend 1977. For Corinth, see the various contributions in Schowalter and Friesen 2005. From a wider perspective Lane Fox 1987 and Hopkins 1999 are each superb on early Christianity. On Apuleius and Carthage, see chap. 7, and on Q. Lollius Urbicus,

see the Appendix. For the phenomenon of voluntary martyrdom, Ste Croix 2006; Birley 2006.

9 On Celsus, see Frede 1994, 1999, and chap. 10. On Christian numbers Hopkins 1998 is classic, correcting Stark 1996.

10 Pelling 2002: 301–17 discusses anecdotes about children in Plutarch and Suetonius, and suggests that they appear more frequently in the biographies of ancient authors and philosophers than of political figures, often focusing on education.

11 For patterns of childhood in Roman antiquity I resume, inevitably, themes evident in Bradley 1991a: chap. 5, 1998, 1999, 2001, 2005.

12 Orwell 2002: 948–51. On children and play in antiquity, Shumka 1993 is pioneering. See in this case, Aasgard 2009: 86–112; cf. also Horn and Martens 2009: 196.

13 Cf. Artem. *Oneir*. 1.55; August. *Conf*. 1.9. For scenes of play on children's sarcophagi, see Huskinson 1996: 16–17, 88–9.

14 For animal figurines, see *Jouer dans l'antiquité. Musée de Marseilles–Réunion des Musées Nationaux (1991–1992)*: 64–73. Pet birds: Bradley 1998.

15 The subject of child labour has been advanced by Petermandl 1997 and, with reference to slave children, Laes 2008 (exaggerating claims on the totality of evidence collected); cf. Rawson 2003: 146–209, emphasizing formal education; cf. Aasgard 2009: 103–12; Horn and Martens 2009: 180. For the architectural setting in which the story of Jesus at play on the roof of a house should be understood, see Meyers 2003: 44–69.

16 Seneca: see also *Ben*. 5.25.6, 6.24.1–2; *Ep*. 94.1; cf. Dion. Hal. 7.9.

17 For Jesus as a carpenter, see Batey 1984. The smith relief from Pompeii is well illustrated in Panetta 2004: 152, the Icarus fresco in Panetta 2004: 365. For Jesus and Joseph as blacksmiths, see Batey 1984: 257 n. 2.

18 Julius mosaic: Rostovtzeff 1957: 528; cf. Dunbabin 1978: 119–21.

19 On Jesus and the origins of the alphabet story, see McNeil 1976.

20 Regional particularism: Millar 1968.

21 Safrai 1972, Cohen 1987, Yarborough 1993, and Barclay 1997 provide material on the cultural formation of Jewish boys; note especially Reinhartz 1993 on the similarities between Jewish and wider Mediterranean attitudes towards the preparation of children for adult life. The quotation from the rabbi is taken from MacMullen 1974: 97. On Josephus's education, see Rajak 2002: 11–45.

22 The topic of the historical Jesus has an enormous bibliography: see valuably Smith 1978 (esp. 46–7 for Jesus as a magical apprentice in Egypt); Meier 1991 (esp. 115, 145 n. 17, dismissive of the *Infancy Gospel*), Wilson 1992 (a remarkably inspirational book, to which this essay owes much), Sanders 1993 (esp. 155 on the process by which only Jesus's 'good' miracles were established as formally acceptable), Vermes 2000.

23 Orwell 2002: 283. On miracles in antiquity, see Sanders 1993: 132–68; Kee 1983 is less reliable.

24 Cf. Lactant. *Inst*. 4.28.4. The social marginality of children is one of the main themes of Wiedemann 1989; cf. Aasgard 2007; Mantle 2002: 103 is sceptical of its explanatory value for children's participation in religious ritual. On the use of protective amulets, see Dasen 2003; Bradley 2005.

25 On the innocence of children as the basis of their use as mediums, see Ogden 2001: 196–7; Johnston 2001 (cf. Justin, *Apol*. 1.18). The Verona relief is illustrated in Bolla 2000: 81 fig. 83. Results: cf. Lactant. *Inst*. 7.5.27K.

26 Observed: e.g., Snow 2009: 42, using the phrase of Hobbes. Lactantius: in reference to Epicurus: *uidet … sine ordine ac discrimine annorum saeuire mortem, sed alios ad senectutem peruenire, alios infantes rapi, alios iam robustos interire, alios in primo adulescentiae flore immaturis funeribus extingui*. Protective deities: Lact. *Inst*. 1.20.36; August. *De civ. D*. 4.11.

27 Literary critic: Lodge 2002a: 177, writing of Brenda in E. Waugh's *A Handful of Dust* (1934). Orwell: Orwell 2002: 640–1. The principal items on Roman demography include Parkin 1992, Bagnall and Frier 1994, Saller 1994, Scheidel 2001, Sallares 2002; cf. Frier 2000. Spells: *PGM* IV 1227–64 (Betz 1992: 62); IV 3007–86 (Betz 1992: 96–7); XII 190–2 (Betz 1992: 160); cf. XIII 1–343 (Betz 1992: 172–82); LXXXIII 1–20 (Betz 1992: 300), where a line of the Lord's Prayer is a magical formula.

28 On epilepsy in antiquity, see Temkin 1971. See Supplement no. 11.

29 For details see the following representative spells: *PGM* I 42–195 (Betz 1992: 5–8): king; I 262–347 (Betz 1992: 10–12): linen, ebony; II 1–64 (Betz 1992: 12–14): nocturnal practice, king; III 282–409 (Betz 1992: 26–8): laurel figurine of Apollo, linen; IV 52–85 (Betz 1992: 38): nocturnal practice, linen; IV 94–153 (Betz 1992: 39–40): Osiris; IV 296–466 (Betz 1992: 44–7): figurines; IV 475–829 (Betz 1992: 48–54): Mithras epiphany; IV 930–1114 (Betz 1992: 56–60): linen; IV 1716–1870 (Betz 1992: 69–71): mulberry figurine of Eros in linen, rooster; IV 2241–2358 (Betz 1992: 78–81): Hermes; IV 2359–72 (Betz 1992: 81): Hermes figurine; IV 2373–2440 (Betz 1992: 81–2: juniper and Hermes; IV 2622–2707 (Betz 1992: 86–8): Selene, lime-wood, juniper; IV 3086–3124 (Betz 1992: 98): nocturnal practice, linen; IV 3125–71 (Betz 1992: 98–9): juniper; V 370–446 (Betz 1992: 107–9): lime-wood, Hermes; VII 540–78 (Betz 1992: 133–4): linen; VII 664–85 (Betz 1992: 137): linen; VII 862–918 (Betz 1992: 141–2): Selene, olive-wood; VIII 1–63 (Betz 1992: 145–6): Hermes, ebony; XII 201–69 (Betz 1992: 161–3): king, secret activity; XIII 1–343 (Betz 1992: 172–82): Apollo, laurel, nocturnal activity, Hermes and justice, king; XIII 646–734 (Betz 1992: 188–9): laurel Apollo figurine; XVIIb 1–23 (Betz 1992: 254): Hermes; *PDM* xiv 1–92 (Betz 1992: 195–200): linen; xiv 295–308 (Betz 1992: 213): juniper and ebony. Correspondences: note the

remarks on Apuleius of Fowden 1986: 199. Hermetism: see Copenhaver 1992: Introduction.

11 Lucius and Isis

1 See Schlam 1992: 119 for a passing allusion to the contrast in which I am interested. Novel: Eagleton 2005: 202. Whether the *Met.* can properly be called a novel is a large question here left undiscussed, but I take it as axiomatic that there is a relationship between the text and the time of writing as in the case of the English novel, on which see the brilliantly persuasive Watt 2001 for the eighteenth century, and Eagleton 2005 on the tradition of the realistic English novel at large. Epigraph: Laslett 1984: 88. Roman world: Millar 1981.

2 Conversion to animal form: see chap. 4. Human calculation: note esp. *Met.* 10.34, *sic ipse mecum reputans*; 10.35, *meis cogitationibus liberum tribuebatur arbitrium*.

3 Instructions: often expressed in verbal form. Harrison 2000–1: 255–6 notes the feature. The relevant vocabulary is observed by Fugier 1963: 301–3 in a discussion of the individuality of Isis. Critics agree: e.g., Finkelpearl 1998: 187; Harrison 2000: 235–6, 239.

4 Suggestion: Finkelpearl 1998: 204–8. Fugier 1963: 301–3 compares, for acts of piety undertaken as a result of divine instruction, *CIL* XIV 2: *monitu sanctissimo Cereris et nympharum*; VI 288: *Herculi iussu Siluani dei*; V 663, X 827: *ex uiso …*; note esp. Vidman 1969: no. 597 = Bricault 2005: no. 514/0401 (Aegida-Iustinopolis): *Isidi sacrum. Ex monit(u) eius d(ono) d(edit) L. Valerius Memor VIuir Aug(ustalis) l(oco) d(ato) p(ublice)*.

5 *Obsequium* as integral to the cult of Isis: *Met.* 11.6, 11.9, 11.15, 11.16, 11.19, 11.22 (*bis*). Ironic: cf. Griffiths 1975: 255–6.

6 Infantilizing: the views of Elkins 1976 on the psychic damage of enslavement remain notable and valuable.

7 Compounded by a series of passive verbal forms in *Met.* 11.24: *passus, iussus, exornato, constituto*. Note the statement on ecphrasis of the first-century rhetor Aelius Theon (*Progymnasmata* 119.11 [Spengel] in the edition of Patillou 1997: 68): 'for the most part, about lifeless things' (Kennedy 2003: 46); cf. much later Nicolaus of Myra, *Progymnasmata* 69 (Felten) on description making statues come alive. Lucius is also objectified as a statue in the Risus episode (*Met.* 3.10: *fixus in lapidem steti gelidus nihil secus quam una de ceteris theatri statuis uel columnis*.)

8 Cf. Griffiths 1975: 345: 'Joy is one of the dominant notes of the book.' Rejoicingly: so too Charles Ryder, 'looking cheerful,' at the conclusion of E. Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited* (1945), after a transcendent experience.

9 Positively: see for example Frangoulidis 2001: 14, 163–74. Vocabulary of joy: e.g., *Met.* 11.7, 11.12, 11.14, 11.17, 11.18, 11.19, 11.30. Voluptuous ending: 6.24.

Language of servitude: it is worth stressing that to the Roman reader who knew the realities of slavery in everyday life the notion of enslavement to a god must have been far more meaningful than it can ever be to a modern, especially Western, reader; cf. Bradley 2010b; Fugier 1963: 304–6 notes its significance (more than acquiescence: Kenney 2003: 173); see also Gianotti 1986: 15–31; van Mal-Maeder 1997: 100–1. Obedience: apart from the examples of *obsequium* in the final book, cf. for its association with orders *Met.* 2.30, 3.12, 4.31, 5.13, 6.15. On *obsequium* at large, see Treggiari 1991b: 238–41, and on gods as absolutist, Nock 1925: 97 (= Nock 1972: 47–8).

10 *Curiositas*: the scholarly bibliography on curiosity in the *Met.* is extensive: see the summary of views in Schlam and Finkelpearl 2000: 169–71. Earlier significant treatments include Hicter 1944: 103–4, Labhardt 1960, Joly 1961, Lancel 1961, Schlam 1968–9. Neutral meaning: cf. Griffiths 1975: 48. For *doctrina* and ambitious men from Roman Africa in the high imperial age, see chap. 8, and on Apuleius's *doctrina*, see chap. 1. He can be considered to represent, in Millar's phrase, 'the conquest of the inner citadel of culture by the outsider' (Millar 2004: 401, in relation to Syme's theme of 'the provincial at Rome'). The phrase *studiorum gloriam* must be self-referential given the appearance at *Met.* 11.27 of the man from Madauros [*Madaurensem*]).

11 Lucius's conversion: see chap. 2. Notably: Festugière 1954: 68–84 (quotation: 84); note the celebrated comment of Nock 1933: 138 on 'the high-water mark of the piety which grew out of the mystery religions,' and cf. Griffiths 1975: 6–7, 55. Aelius Aristides: Harrison 2000–1 posits a satirically allusive connection between the *Metamorphoses* and the *Sacred Tales*. Indeterminate: Winkler 1985: 204–47. Parodic: Harrison 2000: 238–52; 2000–1; cf. van Mal-Maeder 1997: 104–8. (Different from deliberately 'frustrating our curiosity,' as in Burkert 1987: 98.)

12 Incongruous note: Winkler 1985: 245–7; but see Beck 2000: 562. Inscription: *[Aurel]ius Mithres Aug. l. strator Serapi d.d.* (Vidman 1969: no. 388 = Bricault 2005: 501/0125, dismissed as irrelevant by Winkler 1985: 246 n. 7); cf. Witt 1971: 303 n. 30. Specimen: Vidman 1969: no. 389 = Bricault 2005: no. 501/0126. Commodus: Witt 1971: 237. For the possibility that Apuleius himself was a Mithraist, see Beck 2000, developing Coarelli 1989.

13 Gullible: Winkler 1985: 215–16; Shumate 1996: 325; Harrison 2000: 240, 245; 2000–1. Inscription: *CIL* XIV 2112 = *ILS* 7212 = *FIRA* III no. 35.

14 Evidence: Winkler 1985: 216–22; Harrison 2000: 245–7. Kenney 2003: 173–4 finds the third initiation 'a bombshell,' as if worship of Isis and worship of Osiris were somehow incompatible. Triadic: Smith 2009: 59. Inconsistencies: see Perry 1967: 254–82 on the 'neglect of logical sequence' (254). Literary form: cf. the absence of any fixed form for the early English novel; Eagleton 2005: 36, 75, 81. Complete: van Mal-Maeder 1997. Mithraic initiation: Burkert 1987: 98–9.

Griffiths 1975: 339 doubts that a third initiation was normal. Nock quotation: Nock 1933: 150. Dedications: Nock 1925: 95–7 (= Nock 1972: 45–8); cf. Harris 2009.

15 Dodds 1965; cf. Liebeschuetz 1979: 216–17 (for Bowersock 1969: 75, an age of 'hypersensitivity in literature and bodily care'). Syme (1988: 668–88) attributed decay in the Antonine age to 'a failure of the intellect,' evident in the display of superstition and the prominence of sophists. To seek reflections in the *Met*. of the age in which it was written is unproductive according to Winkler 1985: 228–30; cf. Harrison 2000: 238. I cannot disagree more. According to a very confident Harris (2009: 228), Dodds's conception was 'a great mistake' (but contrast 282).

16 On Celsus and his work, see Chadwick 1953: xiv–xxix (the quotations that follow are from his translation); Frede 1994, 1999; Alexander 2005. For the sake of argument I assume that the *Met*. belongs roughly to the middle of the second century (see further below).

17 Numbers of Christians: Hopkins 1998; cf. Stark 1996: 4–13.

18 On the treatise, see Griffiths 1970: 33–74, 100–1 (his translation is quoted); Richter 2001. For the date of the work, ca. 115, Jones 1971: 137; cf. Griffiths 1970: 17.

19 Sextus: M. Aurel. *Med*. 1.9; cf. Philost. *VS* 557. Nicagoras: Puech 2002: 357–60 (see esp. 360 n. 1: 'Qu'Apulée se réfère à un personage réel, différent d'ailleurs de son équivalent, tout aussi réel (Flavia d'Hypata) de *Lucius ou de l'âne*, est maintenant confirmé par les épigrammes publiées par Ch. Kritsas (Mélanges Théocharis, Athènes, 1992, p. 398–413), où apparaît cette Salvia de Thessalie, dont il fait la mère de son héros'); cf. Heath 1996: 67. Understood: Löfstedt 1958: 2. Tertullian's question provides an apposite illustration of the ordinary meaning of *curiositas*. On dissociative religious experience, see Lewis 2003.

20 Complex: Beard, North, and Price 1998: 245–312. On rational and irrational features of the Antonine age and Apuleius's writings within that context as a search for truth, see esp. Callebat 1998: 77–93.

21 Unknown: modern views, all inconclusive, are summarized in Schlam and Finkelpearl 2000: 16–18. Add Hunink 2002, who proposes that the *Metamorphoses* must follow the *Apology* and thus be after 157/8, the date of Apuleius's trial, because Apuleius could not have denied the accusations of magical practice made against him in Sabratha if he had written the *Metamorphoses* beforehand. The strongest argument that the *Metamorphoses* is later than the trial must be that the *Apology* would have mentioned it had it existed when the trial took place, and I think this is probably right. But an argument from silence must always be weak. The *Metamorphoses* could have been written early (in Rome, say), and published only after the events recounted in the *Apology*; but since the *Apology* as it now exists may or may not be the speech actually given at the trial, any argument from the fixed date of 157/8 is

tenuous. Elsner 2007: 291 (over-)confidently states that the *Metamorphoses* was 'probably written around A.D. 170 or 180,' apparently following Harrison 2000. Roman bias: note that Festugière 1954 is a book about Greek religion. On the meaning of 'Greekish story' see Harrison and Winterbottom 2001: 15. On legal and technical language, see Norden 1912. *Peculium: Met.* 3.9, 10.14; *pomerium*: 1.21, 2.1, 9.9; *postliminium*: 1.25, 2.28, 3.25, 4.25, 5.7, 9.21, 10.12; cf. esp. 7.10, *fisci aduocatus*, instituted by Hadrian (*HA Hadr.* 20.6). Apuleius in Rome: *Flor.* 17.4. Personal familiarity: *Met.* 2.19, *Romana frequentia*; 6.8, *metas Murtias*; 9.10, *in Tullianum*; fetials, 2.16; Salii, 4.22, 7.10; the *iustitium*, 4.33; the *consilium*, 7.14. The thesis that Apuleius is identical with the L. Apuleius Marcellus known from Ostia and was in Rome in the years 145–52 remains intriguing (Coarelli 1989; cf. Beck 2000).

22 Porticus Minucia: Richardson 1992: 315–16; *LTUR* IV 132–7 (Manacorda). Still fresh: it does not have to follow that a Roman city audience was in mind (Dowden 1994; cf. Graverini 2002); elite Romans had diverse geographical origins, and travelled, as did Apuleius himself (one source for his narrative interest in the details of travel; Zimmermann 2002 offers a view of their metaphorical significance).

23 Temples and shrines: Roullet 1972: 35–8; Malaise 1972b: 167–97; Richardson 1992: 212–13; *LTUR* III 110–16; Malaise 2004. Tiber embankment: Palmer 1990: 18–28; *LTUR* III 114 (Chioffi). Altars and dedications: see below. Statues: Roullet 1972: 41–2; cf. Griffiths 1975: 123–37. Coinage: Witt 1971: 236. Isis Campensis: Roullet 1972: 23–35; Malaise 1972b: 187–215; Turcan 1996: 105–6; Richardson 1992: 211–12; *LTUR* III 107–9 (Coarelli). Cleopatra: Walker and Higgs 2001: 146. Tiberius: Jos. *Ant.* 18.65–80. *Menologia rustica: ILS* 8745 = *Inscr. It.* XIII 284–91, with Salzman 1990: 169–71; cf. Versluys 2004. Palestrina: the Palestrina mosaic is traditionally dated to the second century BC (Meyboom 1995), but may be later. Sistrum: *BM Cat. Sculpture* 1935.

24 For the individuals mentioned, see *CIL* VI 570 + 30796 = *ILS* 4387 = Malaise 1972b: 119–20 no. 23 (Caracalla); *CIL* VI 402 + 30755 = *ILS* 4396 = Malaise 1972b: 117 no. 17 (Scipio Orfitus [*PIR*^{2} C 1447]); *CIL* VI 354 = *ILS* 2218 = Malaise 1972b: 116 no. 14 (L. Ceius Privatus); *CIL* VI 2244 = *ILS* 4408 = Malaise 1972b: 123–4 no. 33 (P. Sextilius Papia); *CIL* VI 15782 = Malaise 1972b: 127 no. 50 (Herennia Laudica); *CIL* VI 2246 = *ILS* 4404 = Malaise 1972b: 124 no. 35 (Usia Prima); *CIL* VI 32458 = *IG* XIV 1366 = Malaise 1972b: 131–2 no. 66 (Alexandria); *CIL* VI 24760 = *ILS* 8180 = Malaise 1972b: 129 no. 57 (Delphicus, Pontulena Prepusa, C. Pontulenus Coenus); *CIL* VI 346 = Malaise 1972b: 114 no. 7 (Crescens); see fully Malaise 1972b: 112–66; Malaise 1972a: 67–95.

25 Egyptomania: Witt 1971: 70–88, 222–42; De Vos 1980; cf. Merkelbach 1995: 131–46. Carthage and Athens: see chaps. 2, 7, 8. Sabratha: Haynes 1965: 127–8; Kenrick 2009: 62–3. Corinth: it is important to remember that Corinth was a Roman colonial foundation, even as its character changed in the middle of

the second century; on its Roman identity and status, see Engels 1990: 16–21, 67–74; Alcock 1993: 168–9; on Isis worship, see Engels 1990: 102–7 (including Cenchreae). Literary imitation: on the *Met.* and epic, see Schlam 1992: 18–28.

26 Institutional background: of little interest to critics, to judge from Schlam and Finkelpearl 2000. E. Gibbon: *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, chap. 3.

27 Cluster: Boatwright 1987: 33–73; Pantheon: Hetland 2008. Deified Hadrian (dedicated in 145): Richardson 1992: 184–5; *LTUR* III 7–8 (Cipollone). Mausoleum (completed by Pius): Boatwright 1987: 161–81; Richardson 1992: 249–51. Venus and Rome: Boatwright 1987: 119–33; Richardson 1992: 409–11; *LTUR* V 121–3 (Cassatella). Athens: Birley 1997: 183–4; Boatwright 2000a: 144–57; cf. Thomas 2007: 26–8. Trajan's Forum: Richardson 1992: 175–8; *LTUR* II 348–56 (Packer).

28 Antinous (*PIR*^{2} A 737): Lambert 1984: 143–54, 177–97 (cf. esp. Cassius Dio 69.11.2–4); Birley 1997: 247–50; Lane Fox 2006: 4: 'Not even Alexander the Great had done quite so much for his lifelong love, Hephaestion'; Vout 2007: 52–135. Quotation: Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* 113. Consecration: see Price 1987 for the normal process. Jones 2010: 75–83 emphasizes the lack of formal deification, though I think it would not matter to most subjects of empire; their emperor in my view was rather more than 'a citizen writ large.' Hymned: Mitford 1971: 195–9; Lebek 1973. Imprecation: Gager 1992: no. 28; Jordan 1996: no. 152. Tivoli: Opper 2008: 177–8**.** Glass flasks: Stern 1995: 230–2. Two North African portraits of Antinous are known, one from Lepcis Magna; see Meyer 1991: 82–5, taf. 70, 71, 72, 73. Christians: Euseb. *HE* 4.8.2–3 (= Justin, *Apol*. 1.29). Emperor: Millar 1977: 6 (cf. xi).

29 Rule: Birley 2000: 149–56. Aelius Aristides: Syme 1988: 681, 1991: 188; cf. Swain 1996: 265–6, 274–84. Pausanias: cf. Arafat 1996: 188–9. Marcus: cf. Rutherford 1989: 107–15; and cf. App. *BC* 4.16.

30 Rulings: Williams 1976: 74–8; for Pius's legislation, see esp. Gualandi 1963: I 58–102; cf. also Millar 1977: 332, 337–8, 427, 436: note esp. the letter to a city in Macedonia on local taxes, the size of the boule and matters of magisterial jurisdiction (*SEG* XXIV 619), and his judgment of a boundary dispute between Coronea and Thisbe (*IG* VII 2870). On Pius's building activities, far more extensive than conventionally recognized and shrewdly used to promote imperial power, see Thomas 2007: 29–52. Frontiers: Thomas 2007: 43–6. Constrained: visible in the construction of Suetonius's imperial biographies (Bradley 1991b). Solar symbolism: Thomas 2007: 66, 68–9.

31 Apuleius: cf. *Met*. 11.17, *quae sub imperio mundi nostratis reguntur*. Idioms: cf. Harrison 2000: 149.

32 Idealizing features: cf. Stewart 2003: 112. Peace: cf. Strabo 3.4.20. Nude: cf. Hallett 2005: 160–206. *Apol*. 85: the types of statue concerned elicit no comment from Hunink 1997: II 208.

33 Striking: Kleiner 1992: 269. Britain: Birley 2005b: 114–57; Breeze 2006: 26–9. Elite male Romans: Hallett 2005: 206–17; the sarcophagus in the Palazzo Ducale at Mantua is a supreme example. Favorinus: *HA Hadr*. 15.12–13. Antoninus as *imperator*: for examples now in Copenhagen, London, Munich, Naples, Rome, and Madrid, see Wegner 1939: 127–44; cf. Hallett 2005: 184 pl. 105, for a partially nude statue from the Campus Martius, which has a Greek helmet and a leather cuirass on a tree stump close by.

34 Nothing: see Winkler 1985 for the view that the *Met.* contains no exclusively arcane Isiac knowledge.

35 Frivolous: Auerbach 2003: 60–3. Certainty of knowledge: cf. *Met*. 9.14, *certae religionis*. Absolute: cf. Callebat 1998: 77–93. Secure and stable: Thomas 2007: 161.

12 Apuleius and Adultery in the Age of the Antonines

1 Eagleton 2007: 103.

2 Inserted tales: Tatum 1969. The notion of the progress of love is borrowed from Alice Munro. Lucius and Photis: *Met*. 2.7–10, 16–17; Lucius and Isis: *Met*. 11.1–7, 24–5; Charite and Tlepolemus: *Met*. 4.23–7, 7.9–14, 8.1–14 (tragedy); Philebus and Syrian priests: *Met*. 8.24–6; Plotina: *Met*. 7.6–7; bestiality: *Met*. 10.19–23; incest: *Met*. 10.2–12, 23–4; Cupid and Psyche: *Met*. 4.28–6.24. (The so-called *spurcum additamentum* is unlikely to have been written by Apuleius, but is not out of keeping with his interest in the physically erotic; see Lytle 2003; Hunink 2006; Gaisser 2008: 64–5.) Universe of love: see Puccini-Delbey 2003, an important and thorough study, with careful attention to Apuleian vocabulary; cf. Lateiner 2000.

3 On the theme, see Bechtle 1995 (impenetrable, despite several readings); Mattiaci 1996 (text and Italian translation of Book 9, with an introduction on the structure of Apuleius's stories and philological commentary); Harrison 2006; Langlands 2006: 230–46 (though I do not understand the meaning of 'its' in the statement that the Roman novels of Petronius and Apuleius 'explore not the *dangers* of marital scrutiny and suspicion, but its *futility* and insincerity' [246]). Meroe: a female practitioner of magic, like Milo's wife Pamphile, may be suitable for Thessaly, the proverbial land of magic in which the *Metamorphoses* is set, but whether Apuleius assumes that all female innkeepers in real life were prostitutes (Dickie 2000: 582) is questionable: at Emerita (Merída), far from Rome, deep within the Iberian peninsula, a female innkeeper named Sentia Amaranis was commemorated by her husband as a wonderful woman; she is shown on her stele pouring wine from a barrel, utterly respectably (illustrated in the Merída museum catalogue: *Museo Nacional de Arte Romano* [Madrid 2000]: 92). Inventions: a doubt must always remain, given the nature of the

Onos, in which a bestiality episode (50–2) like that in the *Metamorphoses*, an element in the main narrative, evidently reveals a common source (cf. *P. Oxy.* 4762 with the comments of D. Obbink, fifteen short lines giving a partial narrative of a woman's sexual encounter with an ass that may be a fragment of or otherwise related to the original story, which is sometimes attributed to Lucius of Patrae; May 2010 attributes the narrative to the *Milesian Tales* of Aristeides, Stramaglia 2010 to private pornographic literature). Apuleius's adultery tales, however, as digressions from the main plot, seem to be different.

4 Object: as a subject in fiction adultery is not unusual. One notable modern illustration is Kitty Fane's obsessive affair in W. Somerset Maugham's *The Painted Veil* (1925), where adultery drives the plot and forms the prelude to a voyage of redemptive self-knowledge not unlike that of Lucius. So too with Evelyn Waugh's *A Handful of Dust* (1934), though here it is Brenda Last's deceived husband who progresses in self-knowledge. In the *Metamorphoses* adultery is much more incidental, which only sharpens the question of why it is there at all. Lucius and Photis: their relationship is asymmetrical and cannot be construed as a 'marriage' (Frangoulidis 2001: 36, 171): Lucius, a slave-owner, takes advantage of another slave-owner's (admittedly willing) slave, Photis, solely for the sake of sexual pleasure, not with any thought in mind of marriage. Appetites: both men and women initiate illicit love in the *Metamorphoses*, though the sexual energies of women, from a male point of view, seem especially difficult to control. The story of the slave *uilicus* and the story of Socrates make use of a cheating husband, a figure sometimes thought to be absent from Latin literature (Richlin 1992: 218). Moralizing: Finkelpearl 1998: 156 comments: 'The faults of the adulterers are not seen as very dangerous, but they are presented for our enjoyment and definitely not for our edification.' Purpose: my discussion continues from that in chap. 5. For the appeal of Apuleius's stories to Italian authors of the Renaissance (especially Boccaccio and Boiardo), see the splendid presentation of Gaisser 2008: 100–7, 176–80; cf. Mattiaci 1996: 7–31.

5 Offence: see further below for the legal details. Slaves: the story illustrates an essential paradox of slavery, that the slave is conceptualized as a thing but acts as a human being. Resolution: *Dig*. 48.2.5. Anticipated: *Dig*. 48.5.25. (24) pr.

6 Hijmans et al. 1985: 189 point out that no actual affair is specified in this episode. An enormous storage jar of the realistic type Apuleius must have had in mind for his story was included in the exhibition *In Stabiano: Exploring the Ancient Seaside Villas of the Roman Elite*, on display at the Toledo Museum of Art, Toledo, Ohio, from 20 November to 12 February 2007; it was evidently, however, not considered distinctive enough an artefact to be photographed for the accompanying publication of the same name, which in a sense confirms the lower-class ordinariness of the context of Apuleius's story.

7 Shoes might always be a problem in illicit bedroom situations. *The Painted Veil* opens on a tense note when Kitty Fane and her lover suspect the unforeseen arrival of her husband as a doorknob turns on the outside of the room in which they lie together:

> 'Walter,' she whispered, trembling.
> She pointed to his shoes. He tried to put them on, but his nervousness, for her alarm was affecting him, made him clumsy, and besides, they were on the tight side. With a faint gasp of impatience she gave him a shoe horn.

Reality: the thief who steals at the baths is a literary stereotype, represented especially by Catullus's *furum optime balneariorum Vibenni pater* (33.1–2); cf. Tert. *Apol*. 44.2 (*lauantium praedo*), closer to Apuleius's day, and in North Africa. But like all stereotypes this one has some basis in fact. The loss of clothes and shoes at the baths was endemic enough for the bereft to resort to savage imprecations for revenge, even on the fringes of empire: in Britain, the goddess Sulis, at Bath, was repeatedly asked for retributive aid in such circumstances; see Tomlin 1988: 79–81; cf. Gager 1992: 175–80. For a prayer for justice against a thief who had stolen a pair of boots and a pair of sandals (*caligae, soleae*) at Italica in Spain, see Tomlin 2010: 253–8.

8 For an apposite illustration of a wicker cage, from the *fullonica* of Veranius Hypsaeus at Pompeii, see Panetta 2004: 167; cf. Hijmans et al. 1995: 214.

9 Frangoulidis 2000: 77 observes that it is the Ass who sets in motion events that lead to the miller's death and his own further suffering. Gaisser 2008:178 notes that Philesitherus does not live up to the expectations set of him in the old woman's address to the miller's wife; cf. the Ass's description of the miller as a good man when he has already been badly treated by him, and on such signs of compositional inconsistency, see Perry 1967: 254–82. Winkler 1985: 16 speaks of the 'triumph' of the miller, without mentioning his death. Better, observe Tatum 1969: 188: the adultery stories 'completely discredit the idea of sexual pleasure as a desirable thing.'

10 Harrison 2006.

11 Mime: Fantham 1988–9 ('missing link'); see May 2006: 10–15, on Apuleius and mime, with references. Lateiner 2000: 318 comments on the fuller that he 'transcends the mime's role of *stupidus*' in his punishment of his wife's lover. Adultery mime: Reynolds 1946; Kehoe 1984. Unseemly: to such an extent that the city of Massilia once prohibited mimes (Val. Max. 2.6.7b). Schlam 1992: 76–8 comments on the tales in Book 9 solely in terms of the mime tradition; Gaisser 2008: 100 believes that Apuleius's stories derive from the mime, which always had an amusing conclusion. Oxyrhynchus Mime: Beare 1950: 314–19. In a later age, Lactantius (*Inst.* 6.20.30–1) was outraged at the effects of adultery mimes on their viewers. Pantomime: the Judgment of Paris

is not called a pantomime, but the passage is a very long description of what is surely this form; May 2008 doubts its realistic character.

12 The modern academic exercise of consigning extracts of Apuleius's text to various generic roots does not seem to me to reflect a plausible understanding of the way in which readers in Roman antiquity, especially first-time readers, read the *Metamorphoses*. There is also the issue of what I have elsewhere called 'the Bardon factor' (Bradley 2008; see further below). The view that Apuleius intended his readers to feel invited to read his text aloud, with variation of voice and gesture (Keulen 2007b), illustrates clearly the issue of intentional fallacy.

13 This approach contrasts with criticism that passes over historical contingency. If, for instance, the view is taken that sex in the *Metamorphoses* is inherently subversive (Puccini-Delbey 2003), I think that there is an obligation to explain what it is that is being subverted and how what is being subverted is subverted, which requires at a minimum some reference to Antonine society and Apuleius's place within it; or, if it is claimed that there are no examples of happy or successful marriages in the *Metamorphoses* (Frangoulidis 2001), some culturally specific criteria by which to determine marital success in Roman society are clearly required. Frangoulidis (2001: 103) finds that one of Apuleius's concerns is 'the futility of human love,' the evidence for which is the absence of 'marital bliss' in Lucius's world. This is inherently arguable because the actions of the brave Plotina are presumably based on what must be taken as a concordant union; and even though the context is mythical, the wedding of Cupid and Psyche has encouraging potential. More important, unless successful marriage is defined in Roman terms (not vaguely 'Mediterranean' [Winkler 1985: 16]), which may or may not be identical with those of the modern romantic tradition, any generalization about marital bliss is open to question. Much is known about the process by which marital alliances were brought into being among the Roman elite (see comprehensively Treggiari 1991b); but how the criteria concerned applied to concepts of happiness and whether happiness was synonymous with success in marriage are issues that require culturally specific answers, as illustrated not least by Jerome's pornographic interest (*Ep*. 1) in the torture of a couple accused of adultery by an aggrieved husband at Vercellae (Christianity did make a difference). Observe that Apuleius's adultery stories are adapted in Boccaccio's *Decameron* to consist with fourteenth-century Italian social conditions (Gaisser 2008: 100–7). Other works: see the survey of Richlin 1992.

14 I give only the main points of the law; for a full account, see Treggiari 1991b: 277–98; McGinn 1998: 140–7, 171–94; Fayer 2005: 189–373, esp. 212–326. Note that Virgil (*Aen*. 6.612) assigned executed adulterers to Tartarus.

15 Symbolic: Edwards 1993: 34–62 (the legal ruling from Antoninus Pius cited between literary texts from Cicero and Tacitus [55] shows the methodological flaws involved with this view).

16 Example: *Dig*. 48.5.12 (11).3. One modern authority has observed: 'The adultery law is the only *lex* to which special monographs – all written within the Severan period – were devoted' (Bauman 1968: 73).

17 *Dig*. 48.5.39 [38].10. Julio-Claudian and early Flavian periods: this is not to minimize evidence of adultery cases in narrative sources; see, for trials, Garnsey 1970: 21–4, 58–9; cf. Talbert 1984: 466.

18 See respectively for these rulings *Dig*. 48.16.16, 48.16.10.1–2, 48.5.6.2, 48.5.28 [27].6, 37.9.8, 48.5.34 [33] pr., 48.5.39 [38].8, 48.2.5, 48.18.17 pr., 48.5.33 [32] pr., 48.5.39 [38].8, 48.5.14 [13].3. T. Prifernius Paetus: Birley 1997: 385. L. Cornelius Latinianus: Birley: 1997: 377, 328 n. 24. Calpurnius Flaccus: Birley 1997: 153. On replies to petitions to the emperor, see Millar 1977: 240–52.

19 Need: modification took place right up to the age of Constantine, but post-Severan developments are not of concern here. On juristic development of the *Lex Julia*, with special reference to *lenocinium*, see McGinn 1998: 216–47. Specific episodes: earlier T. Vinius, eventually Galba's praetorian prefect, was punished by Caligula for his complicity in the adultery of Cornelia, wife of Calvisius Sabinus, in Pannonia (Tac. *Hist*. 1.48; Plut. *Galba* 12.1–3; Cass. Dio 59.18.4); Hadrian (*Dig*. 24.2.8) exiled for three years a man who had abducted a woman on a journey and attempted to have sex with her. *Defixio*: Jordan 2003, a new edition of *DT* 198, a lead curse-tablet of imperial date found in a grave at Cumae attesting a libertine group, now in the British Museum. Senatorial decree: *Dig*. 23.2.59, 60, with Talbert 1984: 449 for other sources. Suetonius (*Vesp*. 11) records that Vespasian sponsored a *senatusconsultum* making a woman who had an affair with another person's slave tantamount to a slave herself (*ancilla*).

20 Concern: I prefer this word to the cliché of 'anxiety' often used in rhetorical assertions about Roman society, because it can, while vague, be used as a historically descriptive term if based on evidence (especially the institutional evidence of law). One cause of tension at the individual level that always arose from adultery was the risk of illegitimate offspring (Artem. *Oneir*. 2.7, 3.25). Debate: Garnsey 1967; Bauman 1968; cf. McGinn 1998: 142. Preponderant: as indicated in the Preface, this is a familiar problem in ancient history, where the types and distribution of evidence for different historical periods are hardly ever congruent enough to allow anything but impressions, as opposed to precise views, to be formed of social and cultural change or of shifts in mentality. The social concern I am postulating may in fact have been as great in the first century as it was in the second century and beyond, but it does not reveal itself in quite the same way. Tertullian: see Barnes 1971: 55, 247 (the edict was either from the bishop of Carthage or the bishop of Rome, perhaps Callistus [217–22]).

21 For the possibilities on the date of composition of the *Met*., see chap. 11. It is, I think, worth stressing how very little is known about Apuleius, especially when compared with modern writers whose lives can be documented in meticulous

detail (see, for example, Reader 2006 on Kingsley Amis, to excess): no evidence for Apuleius from contemporaries, no school or university records, no family archives, no dossier of private correspondence with friends and relatives, no interviews with people who remembered him after his death.

22 Millar 1981. In one respect, the character of the divinities introduced, the *Met.* may have an especially North African colouring (Leglay 1983).

23 Law on marriage: not to be confused with the adultery law (Hunink 1997: II 216). Harrison 2000: 225 takes *Met*. 6.22.4 as an example of Apuleius's learning without application to contemporary circumstances. Keulen 1997, in another illustration of the view that reading the *Metamorphoses* was meant as a game for contemporaries, the object of which was to spot literary allusions, acknowledges Apuleius's legal knowledge as a trained rhetorician (cf. Norden 1912: 24), but denies that he was in any sense a lawyer.

24 Intended: Garnsey 1970: 23. Set: Hunink 2003: 88 has the *Met.* exclusively in Thessaly. In *Dig*. 48.2.3 pr. I take it that *proconsul* means provincial governors in general, including imperial legates.

25 On *pudor* and *pudicitia*, see chap. 5; cf. Val. Max. 6.1 pr. for Pudicitia, with Langlands 2006: 138–91. Claims on this basis could sometimes be laid on men as well (*Dig*. 48.5.14 [13].5). Plautine: Pasetti 2007: 108–10.

26 Standard: Hunink 1997: II 190–3, without legal comment; see on the passage McGinn 1998: 187–9, with *Dig*. 48.5.2.2, 48.5.15(14) pr., 48.5.30 (29).4; and on profiteering, see Gardner 1986: 131–2. Assumptions: *Dig*. 22.5.2–3.1 pr. Scheme: not necessarily a meaningless trope (Tracy 1976).

27 Pliny: Bradley 1991b. Pudicitia and coins: *RIC* II 552, 505–6, III 462, 494–5, IV 359 (Indices). Funeral oration: paraphrased from Smallwood 1966: no. 114. Ostia: *CIL* XIV 5326; see Meiggs 1973: 233; Hannestad 1988: 214. Apuleius has apposite sacrifices by Tlepolemus for his pending marriage to Charite (*Met*. 4.26). Apotheosis: Vogel 1973; Hannestad 1988: 215–18; Kleiner 1992: 287. Pius and Faustina married ca.110.

28 Pius: Julian, *Caesares* 312A.

29 Suetonius: Bradley 1985. Marius Maximus: Syme 1971b: chaps. VII, VIII; cf. Syme 1979: 656: 'an arrant scandalmonger' (as often elsewhere). The complex problem of the *Historia Augusta* can be understood from Momigliano 1954, White 1967, Honoré 1987, and a huge corpus of books and papers by Syme, too numerous to list in detail; for an introduction, see Syme 1983: chap. XV. My concern here is only with the rumours and allegations the *Historia Augusta* records, not their accuracy (though corroboration is sometimes possible), allowing that some may be very late accretions (gossip, that is to say, may be considered historically meaningful). Unusual: on Syme's view (e.g., 1971b: 155, 1979: 802, quoting Gibbon), the biography of Severus Alexander is a largely idealizing creation of the *HA*'s compiler.

30 *HA Ael.* 5.7; *Ael.* 5.11; *Comm.* 5.4, 5.8–11; *Pert.* 13.8–9, *infamissime dicitur dilexisse* (the invention of Marius Maximus according to Syme 1971b: 131–2); *Sev.* 2.2; 18.8, *famosam adulteriis*. Remark: 'No doubt a traditional witticism,' Syme 1971b: 63. Julianus: probably the jurist P. Salvius Julianus (*cos.* 148), who was proconsul of Africa in 168–9, or Didius Julianus his legate. *HA Pert.* 13.8–9: see Birley 1988b: 45–6 (Apuleius was probably in Carthage at the time, and perhaps knew of the trial). *HA Heliog.* 25.4: likewise dependent on Marius Maximus according to Syme 1971b: 121; cf. 1979: 800.

31 Syme 1971b: 130 attributes *HA Marcus* 29.2 and 19.7 to Marius Maximus, stories not his invention but reproducing 'the verbal tradition current in high society'; cf. Aur. Vict. 16.2; see also Syme 1983: 36–7, 81 (ambiguous). Marcus in the *Meditations* (6.13) writes of his sexual restraint as a young man, and gives a very mechanical understanding of the sexual act; see on his prudishness Rutherford 1989: 118–19. Venus and Rome: Cass. Dio 72.31.1; see Hannestad 1998: 214. Shamed: cf. Syme 1983: 40. To Julian (*Caes.* 312A), Marcus showed poor judgment in mourning excessively a dissolute wife.

32 Faustina: Birley 1987: 224–5 allows a 'few escapades.' Syme 1983: 36 guesses that the Chaldaean story was invented by the compiler of the *Historia Augusta*, which is impossible to confirm. Portraiture: Kleiner 1992: 278.

33 Associations with Isis and Dionysus: Witt 1971: 72, 84; Panayotakis 1998: 126; Finkelpearl 1998: 153; cf. Krabbe 2003: 20–1, 50 n. 71. Pantheia of Smyrna: Lucian, *Imagines, Pro Imaginibus*; cf. M. Aurel. *Med.* 8.37; *HA Marcus* 9.4; *HA Verus* 7.10; see Barnes 1967: 72; Jones 1986: 75–7. Erudite readers may have recalled that Caligula's sister Drusilla had been given the name of Panthia when deified in 38 (Cass. Dio 59.11.3). Apuleius's character may also recall the Pantheia of Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*.

34 Carthage: *HA Hadr.* 20.4 (perhaps not an official act; Boatwright 2000a: 105). Military discipline: Le Bohec 2003; a connection has been detected between Hadrian's praise of his troops' building techniques and Apuleian rhetoric at *De deo Socr.* pr. 3; see Thomas 2007: 26–8. Architecture: cf. Fronto, *Princ. Hist.* 10 (2.206 [Loeb]), Fronto to Lucius Verus in 165: *Eius itinerum monumenta uideas per plurimas Asiae atque Europae urbes sita, cum alia multa tum sepulchra ex saxo formata* ('Records of his progresses one can see set up in many cities of Asia and Europe, tombs built of stone as well as many others'). Cities: Boatwright 2000b. Olympieion: Boatwright 2000b: 153. Ephesus: the altar showed scenes of Verus's adoption by Pius in 138, of his victories against the Parthians in the mid-160s, and, after his death in 169, of his deification; see Kleiner 1992: 309–12, with pl. 279 (especially); Thomas 2007: 31, with pl. 15b. Note that Pausanias gives more attention to Hadrian as a material benefactor of the Greeks, especially the Athenians, than any other emperor (Bowie 1996).

35 Antinous: see chap. 11; for Hadrianic initiative, Price 1984: 68; Arafat 1996: 183–8.

36 Piazza Armerina: Dunbabin 1978: 53 with pl. 198. Even on the remote frontiers of empire, a military officer might write to his brother to ask for a supply of hunting nets: *Tab. Vind.* II 233 (Flavius Cerealis, prefect of the ninth cohort of Batavians at Vindolanda).

37 Hadrian and hunting: Anderson 1985: 101–6; Birley 1997: 24–5, 92, 164–6, 240–1 (Cyrenaica), 284–5. Whether a connection should be made with Philesitherus, the 'lover of hunting,' I do not know. Note Cass. Dio 69.2.5: C. Avidius Nigrinus plotted to kill Hadrian during a hunt or at a pre-hunt sacrifice. Note that Hadrian once exiled a man who killed his son during a hunt because the son was engaged in an affair with his stepmother (*Dig*. 48.9.5). Poem: *P. Oxy.* 1085 has traditionally been identified with the poem by Pancrates mentioned by Athenaeus, but the discovery of several new verse fragments suggests that poems about Antinous were written by several writers over time, perhaps for recital in competitions during the celebration of festivals and games; see J.R. Rea's commentary to *P. Oxy.* 4352, one of the new discoveries, revealing that the lion hunt was still being celebrated as part of the cult of Antinous in the late third century. Apuleius was aware himself that the danger from wild beasts, taken as lions by Butler and Owen (1914: 139), gave one reason not to cross the Cyrenaica (*Apol*. 72.5). A fragment of a recently discovered colossal statue of Hadrian from Sagalassos in Pisidia shows the emperor's leg in a boot that is padded with a lion-skin: Opper 2008: 25 fig. 9.

38 Memorialized: Hallett 2005: 203–4 takes *Met*. 8.7 as a literally authentic instance of social practice by 'a member of the provincial elite of Thessaly,' and points (327) to two statues, from Athens and Rome, in comparison; for the practice at large, Hallett 2005: 261–4, cautious on the implications for deification. Images: Paus. 8.9.7 (cf. 8.10.11), with Vout 2007: 113–21. Antinous as Liber: Hallett 2005: 204.

39 On Plotina and the succession, see Birley 1997: 42, 75, 77, 145 (deification). Coinage: Roman, Rémy, and Riccardi 2009. Fidelity: cf. Kleiner 1992: 212. Portraits: of the kind represented by an example from the Baths of Neptune in Ostia, showing on one view a 'sweet and slightly suffering expression' (Boatwright 2000b: 68, with fig. 4.9 = Kleiner 1992: fig. 176). Lesser mortals: Syme 1991: 565–6, on the Ulpia Plotina of *AE* 1975: no. 355. Goddess: cf. Fraser 2006: 49–50: 'In the autumn of 122 after hearing of Plotina's death, Hadrian planned, and possibly began, the construction of a beautiful basilica in her honour at Nemausus (*SHA Hadr*. 12.2–3). The basilica no longer exists, but a modern reconstruction suggests a building with a front facade of eight Corinthian columns.' Imperial women were perhaps brought more into public prominence

by Hadrian than earlier emperors, but there is no need to imagine among the Roman elite of the early Antonine era a new ideal of marital harmony (Noreña 2007), a notion similar to that postulated for the early imperial period by P. Veyne, which has not won wide acceptance: *concordia* has a long history in the ideology of Roman marriage, but it was not comparable to modern notions of 'mutual affection and love' (Noreña 2007: 310). Apuleius's Plotina clearly met the standard of faithfulness set by Roman wives of old: Val. Max. 6.7.3; App. *BC* 4.39.

40 Epicureans: Smallwood 1966 no. 442 = Oliver 1989 no. 73.

41 Correspondence: noted long since by Perry 1967: 241–2. The question arises whether the *Metamorphoses* may in a certain sense be a parody of the inquisitive peripatetic emperor. Authentic: Syme 1991: 103–9 (quotation, 103).

42 Augustan life: see Syme 1971b: 114–15, again associating scandalous content with Marius Maximus; Syme 1983: 175 dismisses the item on Sabina consequently as worthless.

43 Platonic communion: Puccini-Delbey 2003: 257, 274. The Isis story suggests that love as devotion to spirituality and the mysteries of ecstatic religion, to the pursuit of a pure life and blessed afterlife free from transgression, including sexual transgression, is almost a Christianizing view, of which Apuleius was probably aware; cf. chap. 6.

44 Quotation: Burkert 1996: 74. For the diversity of artistic representations of the union, see Stampolidis and Tassoulas 2009: 135–49 (esp. 148–9 for the particularly memorable Capitoline 'birth of the kiss'). On Psyche's story as a subject of Renaissance painting – prime examples: Mantua (Palazzo del Te), Florence (S. Lorenzo), Rome (Palazzo Farnese, Castel Sant'Angelo, Galleria Borghese) – see De Jong 1998, with Signorini 2001 for Mantua.

45 Decline: often stated by Syme (e.g., 1958: 500); see also Auden 1995 (deprecating Apuleius). Fraction: Bardon 1952, 1956. Taste: well illustrated in Harrison 2005a. Decurial background: Pavis d'Escurac 1974: 95 identifies Apuleius as a decurion (see the Appendix). New body: beginning with Winkler 1985.

46 Fragments: Beaujeu 2002: 174. Emulators: e.g., Marius Maximus, and perhaps other now lost biographers whose writings underlie portions of the *Historia Augusta*. It was easier still in later ages to regard the *Metamorphoses* as an autobiography: cf. August. *De civ. D.* 18.18. Biographical: cf. Swain 1997.

47 Williams 1968: 619–23, succinct and authoritative.

48 Alternative: Harrison 2005b advocates the replacement of epic. Quotation: Syme 1984: 1324; the inherently aristocratic character of Latin literature, including historiography, is a theme of Auerbach 2003: chaps. 2, 3. Allegory: Gaisser 2008, an exemplary treatment. Manipulable: the mechanical character of marriage among the Roman elite is best illustrated by the vocabulary Syme

used throughout his writings to describe marital unions: women are 'annexed' by men, and widows are 'relicts' available for further disposal (cf. Bradley 1984); Treggiari 1991b offers a different view. Exemplars: Sall. *BC* 15.1: *adulescens Catilina multa nefanda stupra fecerat*; cf. 14.2: *quicumque inpudicus adulter*; 12.2; 14.7; 25.3: *sed ei cariora semper omnia quam decus atque pudicitia fuit* (Sempronia); Tac. *Ann*. 4.3: *municipali adultero* (Sejanus).

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INDEX

Abraham, 27–8
Abt, A., 202
Accius, 139
Acts of the Christian Martyrs. See under Christianity
Acts of Phileas, 111
Adonis, 223, 251
adultery, 85, 86, 92, 220; criminal offence, 238, 256; divorce compulsory after, 239, 241; emperors, 246–8; guardians, 241; husbands/fathers killing wives/lovers for adultery, 238, 240, 243; *Lex Julia de adulteriis coercendis*/rescripts, 92, 220, 238–41, 243; —, complex law, 239; as matter of social concern, 239–40, 242, 246; by men as sexually inappropriate behaviour, 239; office-holders, 240; penalties for, 238–40; purpose of law, 238, 239; slaves, 231, 232, 240–1; —, evidence and torture, 240; special courts/*quaestio,* 239, 242; on stage, 247; women: adultery only committed by, 231; —, adultery where marriage not lawful, 241; —, affairs with slaves, 231–2; —, charges against women other than wives, 239, 241; —, half dowry lost on adultery, 238, 239; —, pregnant, 240
Aelian, 154; *De natura animalium,* 129
Aelius Aristides, 224; *Sacred Tales,* 213
Aelius Caesar, 247
Aemilius Frontinus, L., 5, 49
Aemilius Paullus, 115
Aesculapius, 49, 57, 137, 138, 152; Apuleius's hymn to, 132–3
Afranius, 13
Africa: black Africans in Roman world, 166–7; —, origins, 168; —, as slaves, 167–8; North Africa (*see* Tripolitania and North Africa); slave trade, 61–2. *See also* slaves and slave trade
Agrippa, M., 56, 154
Alexander, 128–9
Alexandria, 35, 43, 181
amulets, 9, 10; protecting children, 200
animals, 68, 70, 129; disclosing disease/defects in sales, 60; gladiatorial and Christian martyr contests with wild animals, 135; medicinal properties, 10; mosaic decoration, 130, 135; slaves as (*see under* slaves and slavery); wild animals as means of execution, 121, 135, 179; worship of, 217
Antinous, 214, 217; relationship with Hadrian, 223–4, 249–50, 251, 254

Antius Orestes, P., 6
Antoninus Pius, 15, 134–5, 151, 221–6, 249; adultery, 240; death, 246; homosexuality, 250
Aphrodite, 36, 37
Apollo, 48, 49, 140, 217, 223
Apollonius of Tyana, 18, 27
Apology (Apuleius): Apuleius's self-image, 56–7, 147–8; —, self-deprecating, 158; 'black-and-white' expression, 164–5, 179–80; erotic poetry charge, 16; *doctrina,* 55–6; establishing common intellectual identity with judge, 12–13, 15–19, 56, 57; family life and *Romanitas* (*see* family life); Greek magical papyri, 202–3; history, 55; —, of the Magi, 11; —, Roman historical tradition, 56; law, magic, and culture, 3–22, 55; —, law on adultery, 243, 245; —, law on marriage, 5, 243; literary learning displayed, 12, 15–17; magic charges, 8, 21; —, casting a spell on Thallus the slave, 181–2, 200–2; —, denial of association between fish and practice of magic, 8; Plato, quoting from, 127, 204; poets, 55, 56, 127; *philosophus formonsus,* charge of, 17–18, 147–8; —, defence, 147, 155–63; Pudentilla's fortune, 7, 162, 163; rhetorical and stylistic brilliance, 3; role of detached adviser, 19; scientific interest in fish, 8, 21; slavery and slave trade, 166; substance preserved, 152
Apuleius of Madauros: *Apology* (see *Apology)*; art, interest in, 53; background, 74, 96, 257–61; —, African origins, 145–6; —, birth in Madauros, 36, 53, 74, 96, 126, 155; —, culture and history of Madauros, 143–6; —, family background, 144; bilingual in Latin and Greek, 93; in Carthage in later life (*see under* Carthage); *De deo Socratis,* 93, 223, 225; *De mundo,* 32, 37, 56, 155, 220, 225; demonology, 156; early life, 53, 126–7; education: in Athens, 15, 36, 43, 53, 55, 74, 96, 127, 154, 162, 187, 220, 249; —, in Carthage, 53, 55, 74, 96, 104, 126, 155, 249; —, expeditions and travel, 43, 98–9, 127, 129; —, in Rome/studying law, 53, 74, 96, 127, 187, 220, 228; eloquence, 147–8, 159, 162–3; embodying cultural fluidity, 127; *Epitome of History,* 255; *Florida,* 126–46; —, audience, 141–2; —, content, 128–31, 140–1; —, poets, 127; —, speeches as agents of historical change, 142–3; —, speeches delivered in Carthage, 127; *Golden Ass,* 3; history, 255; hymn to Aesculapius, 132–3; Latin literature/tradition, 13, 126–7, 137, 156–7; literary and rhetorical capacities, 13, 15–16, 53, 96, 98, 127, 255; —, philosophy/philosopher, 54–6, 128, 132, 139, 154–6, 162, 228; magic, practitioner of, 202; marriage to Pudentilla, 3, 4–5, 9, 43, 50; —, not for romantic love, 51; —, in Oea, 41; *Metamorphoses* (see *Metamorphoses*); in Oea, 6, 20, 35, 43, 48, 74, 98; —, presence in community as a threat, 159, 162–3; physical appearance, 17–18, 19, 147–8; poetry, 250; religion, 188, 213–14, 223–4; —, Christianity, 104–5, 183–204; —, conversions and religious knowledge, 24, 35–8; —, cult of Isis, 35–7, 39, 227–8; —, personal spirituality, 73; as scholar and scientist, 8, 9, 12–13, 93, 182; slave-owner, 74, 180; son (Faustinus), 44; statues, 141; as symbol of historical change, 143, 146; traditional moral code of Rome absorbed, 96–8; trial in 158/9 (*see* trial of Apuleius for practising magic)
Arabic Infancy Gospel. See under Jesus of Nazareth
architecture, Roman, 14–15, 41, 135, 223, 249

Aristotle, 8, 16; *Politics,* 59–60; 'principle of unilinear gradation,' 62
Armenian Infancy Gospel, 184
Artemidorus, 69, 195, 200; *Interpretation of Dreams,* 99
Athena, 155
Athens, 154–5, 222, 253; Apuleius studying in (*see under* Apuleius); Eleusinian Mysteries, 37; Isis, 36–7
Auden, W.H., 27, 123
Auerbach, Erich, 228
Augustine, 97, 137–8, 195, 228; as a child, 199; *Confessions,* 24, 27; demonology, 156; studying in Madauros, 144
Augustus (Octavian), 6, 47, 134, 154, 222; *Lex Julia de adulteriis coercendis,* 238–9; political discourse, 239
Aulus Gellius, 13

Baal Hammon, 137, 138
Bacchus, 223
Beechey, Frederic, 176
Beechey, Henry, 176
birds, 166, 185, 189; magic, 86, 204; owls, 86; parrots, 129; pet birds, 192
Britain, Roman, 42
brothers. *See under* family life
Browning, Robert, 229
burial practices: of the Garamantes, 171; in North Africa, 15, 58, 97–8; paying for burial amenities, 214; Romans memorializing the dead, 251

Caecilius, 148
Caelestis. *See* Juno Caelestis
Caesar. *See* Julius Caesar
Commodus, 214, 241, 247, 248
Canapphar, 15
Caracalla, 213, 221, 241
Carthage, 41, 43–4, 46, 53; amphitheatre, 134, 135, 136; and Apuleius, 43–4, 104, 126–46, 187, 243, 249; —, public speeches, 126, 139–40; Byrsa, 133–4, 137; Christianity, 104, 187; —, Scillitan martyrs, 104–5, 187; circus, 134, 136–7; city and provincial institutions, 132–3; cultural change and adaptation, 137–9, 142–3; expansion and importance, 133–4; government, 131–2; proconsuls, 131–2; public buildings, 132–7; religion, 36, 137–8, 222; sanctuary of Tanit, 96–7, 137–8; theatre, 132–3
Cassius Dio, 241, 246
Cato the Elder, 59, 96, 124, 159; *De agricultura,* 91
Catullus, 13, 16, 156, 165
Celsus: and Christianity, 105–7, 122–3, 188, 216–19, 223; *The True Doctrine,* 216
Cereres, 138
Ceres, 137, 138
children, 42; appointment of *tutor* where father dead, 5, 85; becoming adults, 44, 50; —, learning from fathers, 193; —, preparation for adulthood, 189, 192–4, 199–200; behaviour of children, 189; —, performing simple tasks, 192, 194; —, play in childhood, 189–92; birth registration, 5; child sacrifice in Africa, 98; and Christianity: as converts, 105–6; —, relevance of children to becoming a martyr, 112–17; as communal family potential, 86; daughters' marriages, 80, 106; duty to support parents, 92, 119; education of sons, 192–3; —, *educatores,* 85, 90, 94; —, fathers' responsibility, 106, 194–8; —, schools and literacy, 85, 90, 194, 198; and fathers, 106, 115; —, conversions to Christianity, 114–15; —, and children's conversion to Christianity, 114, 117–20; —, education of children, 106, 194–8; —, teaching children, 193; highly valued, 92, 114; history of childhood in Roman antiquity, 184; infant exposure, 85, 92, 94; loss of a child/early death,

113, 117, 201–2; magic and miracle working, 198–202; —, divination, 182–3, 184; —, innocence of, 200; —, magical association of boys/children, 199, 200; marginality of children in Roman society, 199–200; in *Metamorphoses,* 85–6; and mothers, 106, 112–14; —, indulgent towards children, 194; protecting: with amulets and prayers, 200; —, with deities, 201; schools, 194; —, *paedagogus,* 85, 90, 196; raised with non-siblings, 79–80; slaves minding, 85
Christianity, 21, 25–6, 27; adultery, 243; belief in, unquestioning, 216–18; black synonymous with sin, 166; Celsus's criticisms, 105–7, 122–3, 188, 216–19, 223; conversion to, 28, 29–30; —, complaints of undermining family life, 105–6; establishment of early Christian sects, 185; idolatrous nature of amphitheatre activities, 135–6; and the individual, 106–7, 121–2, 123; intolerance of other religions, 27–8; literature, 255; magic, 21, 188; —, miracles, 27–8; martyrdom and family life/familial discord, 105–7, 107–23; —, conversion and divorce, 108–10; —, fraternal strife, 110–12; —, ignoring children in choosing martyrdom, 112–17, 118–21; —, ignoring wives in choosing martyrdom, 114–16; —, interests of the individual placed ahead of the family, 121–2, 123; —, Roman administrators trying to avoid executions, 114–15; martyrs and martyrdom, 104–25, 187–8; —, *Acts of the Christian Martyrs,* 21, 107–8, 121; —, Agathonicê, 112–13, 114; —, emulative effects, 122–3; —, everlasting glory through death, 107, 123; —, execution a public event, 121, 135; —, martyr acts, 107–8; —, *Martyrdom of Marian and James,* 39–40, 110–12, 113–14; —, *Martyrdom of Montanus and Lucius,* 123; —, *Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicity,* 39, 111, 117–21, 122–5; —, *Martyrdom of Ptolemaeus and Lucius,* 108; —, threatening to the established order, 121–2; —, tried for refusing to renounce beliefs, 104, 107–8; monastic communities, 107, 123; mythology and theology, 218–19; numbers in 2nd century, 188, 217–18; regressive despite potential for improving social change, 122; prominence in Roman religious life, 104; rose as symbol of salvation, 39–40; slavery, 122. *See also* Jesus of Nazareth
Cicero, 42, 45, 156, 159, 165; *Brutus,* 54, 157; *De oratore,* 156, 157; *doctrina,* 55–6; family, 80, 92–3; *Letters,* 42, 91; loss of daughter, 113; *Orator,* 54, 157; oratory: describing Republican orators, 160; —, as great orator, 54, 159; —, self-presentation in oratory, 157; —, successful orators, 159–60; philosophy in education, 54, 55; remarriage in the family, 51; slaves, 72
Claudius Maximus: background and life, 15; intellectual capacity, 15; presiding at assizes/Apuleius's trial, 3, 5–7, 14, 127, 147, 151; proconsul, 3, 15
Cleopatra, 221, 222
clothing: dress and deportment, 148–51; of orators, 18, 158; *pallium,* 41, 57; Roman toga, 41, 57, 151; —, as garment for peace, 226; —, for oratory, 158, 160, 163; —, *toga uirilis,* 44, 50; social standing, 150
collegia, 214
Columella, 39, 60; animals, 68; children, 190, 192, 193
Commodus, 214, 241, 247, 248
Constantine, 27, 215
Constantius, 223
conversions. *See under* Apuleius; religion
Cooper, David, 61

Corinth, 187, 222
Cornelius Fronto, M., 15, 56, 146
Cowper, H. Augustus, 70, 74
Cupid and Psyche, 38, 83–6, 89, 211, 230, 243, 247–8, 254

Daedalus, 193
Daumas, Eugène: *Le grand désert: Itinéraire d'une caravane du Sahara au pays des nègres, royaume de Haoussa,* 173
demons and demonology. *See under* magic
Desanges, J., 167, 169
Diana, 30, 31, 53, 214
Digest of Justinian, 239, 240
Dio Chrysostom, 129
Diogenes Laertius, 130
Dionysios of Marathon, 37
Dionysius of Halicarnassus, 192
Dionysus, 218, 223, 251
disease, 60, 117, 140, 170, 201–2; epilepsy, 56, 182, 202
divination, 188; and children, 182–3, 184. *See also* magic
divorce, 86, 92; for adultery, 239, 241; affecting wide circle of kin, 109–10; common in Roman society, 109; compulsory for adultery, 239; and conversion to Christianity, 108–10
doctrina/paideia, 19, 55–6; Apuleius, 13, 16, 53, 98, 127, 140–1, 146, 180; and Christianity, 217, 219; curiosity, 212; Greek sophists, 153; in Oea, 57; and oratory, 159; Roman path to power, 56, 57
Dodds, E.R., 215–16
Domitian, 18, 177, 226, 240
Douglass, Frederick, 69–70
dowry, 44, 56, 84; half dowry lost on adultery, 238, 239. *See also* marriage

earthquakes, 4, 224
education. *See under* Apuleius; children
Egypt: apprenticeship contracts, 193; Egyptomania, 221–2; Hadrian visiting, 223; households, 91–2, 93; magic, 130; mysteries and mystery cults, 227; personal appearance/hair, 156; priests, 130; religion, 32, 33, 35, 47, 212–13, 217–18
Eleusis, 37
Ennius, 12, 13, 156
Eshmoun, 138
Euphrates, 18–19

Fabius Maximus, 115
family life, 41–58; brothers: bond between, 111; —, and conversion to Christianity, 110–12; children (*see* children); and Christianity (*see under* Christianity); conflict and tensions in, 92–3; grandfathers/grandsons, 44; hierarchies of deference, 94, 212; local variations, 42; —, indigenous clannish family forms, 51, 52, 58; mutual support between young and old, 92, 119; normative family life in *Metamorphoses,* 84–8; primacy over the individual, 114; stepfathers, 50–1, 93; structure of Roman families, 79–80, 87–8; —, patriarchal character, 88, 106; virtues, 94–5; women (*see* women)
Favorinus, 57, 154, 227
Festugière, A.-J., 213
fish: catching, 17; importance of fishing to Sabratha, 20–1; and magical practices, 8, 9–12; —, as symbol of new Christian magic, 11; nutritional and medical qualities, 8; as remedies, 10
Flavius Secundus, T., 97–8
Fortuna, 62

Gagliuffi, Giambattista, 174–5
Gaius, 44; slaves, 60, 62
Galba, 90
Galen, 91–2, 200; *On the Properties of Foodstuffs,* 8

Garamantes, 74, 170–2, 177, 179
Gibbon, Edward, 222
Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew, 184, 192
governors/proconsuls: advisers, 6, 21, 151; applying strict standards/traditional norms when hearing trial evidence, 14; in Carthage, 131–2; extensive powers, 6; hearing cases: investigation and judgment the prerogative of governors, 21; —, legal cases, 21; —, no obligation on governors to hear all cases, 6–7; —, travelling to assizes, 6, 151; trials of Christians, 108, 117, 121; trials as public events, 121, 151–2. *See also* trial of Apuleius for practising magic
Great Chain of Being, 61–2
Great Gods' sanctuary at Samothrace, 6
Greece: family traditions, 106; Greek learning as test of ideal orator, 160; language, 13, 14; lyric poets, 12, 56; magical papyri, 10, 11, 182–3, 199, 200, 202–3; oratory, 14, 127; *paideia* (see *doctrina/paideia*; *pallium*), 41; philosophical tradition, 54–6; religion (*see under* religion); Second Sophistic, 13, 20, 127; sophists, 54, 128, 153–4

Hadrian, 13, 135; adultery, 240; Antinous, relationship with, 223–4, 249–50, 251, 254; author/philosopher, 16, 127, 253; buildings, 223, 249; curiosity, 212; death, 249; funeral oration to Matidia, 246; hunting, 251; justice, 90; library, 154; magic, 11; personality and abilities, 253–4; Plotina, 252–3; poetry, 250, 253; religion, 217–18; rule, 155, 222, 226; —, military power, 226–7; travels, 224, 226, 249, 253; trials, 14
Hadrumentum, 8, 75
Heliopolis, 11
Helios, 10
Hera, 53, 129
Herennius Rufinus, 45, 50, 57; charges: against Apuleius, 43; —, by Apuleius against Herennius, 245; objecting to Pudentilla's marriage to a stranger, 51–2; remarriage of his daughter, 52
Hermes, 204, 223
Herod, 185
Herodotus, 170, 177
Historia Augusta, 246–7, 253
Homer, 12, 13, 127
Horace, 8, 199
Hordeonius Lollianus, P., 153–4
hunting, 250–1

Image of the Black in Western Art, The, 166–7
India, 129, 130
Infancy Gospel of Thomas. *See under* Jesus of Nazareth
Irenaeus, 122, 187
Isis, 23–4, 30–5, 39, 63, 208–11, 213–15, 218, 220–1, 227–8; and Venus, 30, 31
Islam, 27, 30

Jacobs, Harriet, 69, 76
James, William: defining conversion, 25–6; studies of conversions, 29–30, 30–1, 34, 35; *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, 25
Jefferson, Thomas, 61
Jerusalem, 185
Jesus of Nazareth, 27, 224; *Arabic Infancy Gospel*, 184, 191; followers, 217; *Infancy Gospel of Thomas*, 184–98; —, explanations for the stories, 188; —, fear of Jesus, 185–6, 187; —, Jesus deliberating with religious leaders in the Temple, 185, 187; —, Jesus performing simple tasks, 186, 192; —, Jesus playing, 189–92; —, Jesus's teachers, 185–6, 187, 195–7; —, miracles performed by Jesus as a child, 185–93, 199,

202; —, portrayal of Jesus as a child, 184, 185–6, 191; —, socio-cultural document, 198; oral stories in early imperial age, 183–5, 187; returning from Egypt with Mary and Joseph, 185; teachings, 106–7, 115, 184–5, 217. *See also* Christianity
Josephus, 198, 238
Judaism, 52, 104, 106; conversion, 187; Jesus movement as development of Judaism, 184; teaching Judaism, 197–8
Julian, 217; *Caesares,* 253
Julius Caesar, 64, 133, 154, 165; Cleopatra, 221, 222; oratory, 159; slavery, 62, 63
Juno Caelestis, 27, 49, 97, 137, 144
Jupiter, 27, 32, 144, 254
justice, Roman. *See* law and justice
Justin Martyr, 109, 116, 122, 188; *Dialogue with Trypho,* 129; *Second Apology,* 108
Juvenal, 238, 255

Kronos, 32

Lactantius, 193, 201
languages: Greek and Latin, as languages of the elite, 47, 93; —, as languages of alien authority, 14, 47–8; Libyan, 14, 138–9, 145; names, 14–15, 45, 48, 138–9, 145; Punic, 13, 14–15, 47; —, in Africa Proconsularis, 138–9, 145; —, as a lesser language, 48; —, long survival, 161; —, used publicly, 14–15, 128, 138; in Sabratha, 14–15
law and justice, 42; administration of justice, 3, 19; —, available to all provincial citizens, 6–7; —, on margins of empire, 19–20; adultery (*see* adultery); birth registration, 44; children, 5, 85; contract, 33; cultural bias of Roman criminal procedure, 13–14; equity, principle of, 20; guardianship, 44; homicide/*Lex Cornelia,* 241; ideologically important, 6; impartiality of Roman law, 3; impugning opponent's testimony by undermining personal credibility, 14; investigation and judgment the prerogative of governors, 21; judgments, 5; marriage, 220, 243; —, *Lex Julia de maritandis ordinibus,* 5; —, remarriage, 50; —, *repudium,* 110; personal demeanour in courtrooms, 150; *postliminium,* 39; —, reprieve for pregnant women, 115; shaping daily lives, 4–5; slavery/*Lex Aquilia,* 60, 72; suppressing antisocial magical practices, 7; tribunals as symbol of dignity of Roman law, 4; Twelve Tables, 7; witnesses' credibility, 13–14, 245. *See also* governors/proconsuls
Lepcis Magna, 4, 14, 17, 45; exports, 7; marriage customs, 98; religion, 47; as Roman colony, 49; slave trade, 74–5; theatre, 128
Liber Pater, 47, 49, 137, 145, 251
Libyan language, 14, 138–9, 145
Lollianus Avitus, L., 15
Lollius Urbicus, Q., 21, 187–8
Lucan, 96
Lucian, 11; *Onos* (attributed), 38, 74, 89, 187; *Somnium,* 197; *True History,* 89
Lucilius, 16, 139
Lucius Verus, 246, 248, 249
Lucretius, 96

Macedonia, 6, 81, 188, 244
MacMullen, Ramsay, 27
Madauros, 96, 98, 143–6; African history, 145; *duumuiri,* 258–9; religion, 36; small community, 144–5
Magi, 10, 11, 130
magic: amulets, 9, 10; —, protecting children, 200; Apuleius's trial for (*see* trial of Apuleius for practising magic); and Christianity, 27; demons

and demonology, 156, 182, 199; —, invoking Jesus to drive out demons, 187; divination, 182–3, 188; Egypt, 130; —, Alexandria, 181; and the erotic, 8–9, 10–11; and fish, 8, 9–12, 21; Greek magical papyri, 10, 11, 182–3, 199, 200, 202–3; harming rivals with *defixiones,* 136, 137, 202–3; —, for adultery, 241; Jesus performing miracles as a child (*see under* Jesus of Nazareth); law suppressing antisocial magical practices, 7; in literature, 23; magical signs, 22; magicians:—, as enemies of the Roman order, 7; —, and philosophers, 18; and medicine, 39; miracle working (*see* miracles and miracle working); North African preoccupation with warding off evil, 12; penalties for, 7; and religion, 12, 19, 199; and remedies, 9–10; scepticism towards, 19; and sex, 76–8; sorcerers in governor's entourage, 11; threat to social stability, 21; widespread belief in, 7, 9; —, fear of evil, 12; —, irrationality of belief, 19; —, warding off evil, 86
Magna Mater, 46, 137
Marcian, 91
Marcus Aurelius, 46, 116, 215; adultery, 240–1, 247–8; —, wife's adultery, 248; and Antoninus Pius, 224, 246, 249; and Claudius Maximus, 15; crisis in reign, 228; homosexuality, 250; magic, sceptical towards, 19; *Meditations,* 15, 248; teacher, 219
marriage, 42; adultery (*see* adultery); and Christianity, 106–7; criteria/factors in, 51, 80, 84, 92; customs in North Africa, 98; divorce (*see* divorce); dowry, 44, 56, 84; —, half lost on adultery, 238, 239; in Egypt, 92; and family interests, 92; —, maintaining family alliances as regional tradition, 51, 52; high standards of marital propriety, 256; levirate marriage, 52; marital ideology, 51; marriage norms in *Metamorphoses,* 84–5; monogamy and polygamy, 42; parents arranging, 79–80, 84; remarriage, 50–1, 84, 86, 90, 245; —, step-parents, 991; —, and women's choice, 51, 80; upper-class intermarriage, 46; widows (*see under* women); wife's/female virtues, 95, 245, 246
Mars, 15, 144
Martial, 195, 238
martyrs and martyrdom. *See under* Christianity
medicine: amulets as placebos, 9; dividing line between rational and irrational narrow, 9; fish amulets as remedies, 10; and magic, 39; medical qualities of fish, 8; medicinal properties of plants and animals, 10; —, roses, 39
Meiggs, Russell, 178
Menander of Laodicaea, 156
Mercardier, F.J.G.: *L'esclave de Timimoun,* 176
Mercury, 144, 204
Metamorphoses (Apuleius), 11, 23–40, 53; adaptation from Greek precursor, 74, 89, 94, 99; adultery, 230–8, 243–5, 248–9; allusions to authors, 156; animalization of slaves, 62–78; —, assimilation of the Ass to a slave, 67–9; —, consequences of enslavement/animalization, 65–7; —, response to enslavement, 70–1, 72; conversion, 23–40, 187; —, concept of conversion, 23–4, 30–5, 37–8; —, 'conversion narrative,' 24–5, 72–3; —, whether indeterminate or parodic, 213–15; Cupid and Psyche, 38, 83–6, 89, 211, 230, 243, 247–8, 254; date, 74, 98, 220, 243, 249; family and household, 79–103; —, familial universe, 81–2; —, families and households in, 100–3; —, family norms, 84–8; —, household universe, 82–3; Hadrian, influence of,

249–54; history in, 205–28, 255; —, conclusion expressing age of anxiety, 215–19; —, descriptions of Lucius's experiences and change, 206–11, 227–8; —, irrationalism, 216–19; —, whether story ends positively, 211–13; importance of religious themes, 25; interpretations of, 72–3, 229–30; in Latin, 93–4; personal aspect and physical appearance, 148–51, 155–6; portraying authentic religious, social, and economic behaviour, 28; pursuit of the rose, 23, 38; relationship between Lucius and Isis, 23–4, 30–5; setting, 28; whether autobiographical, 24; whether similarities with text of *Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicity,* 123–5
mime, 236–7, 247
Minerva, 27, 49, 144, 221
miracles and miracle working: associated with practice of magic, 199; —, children, 182–3, 184, 198–202; —, divination, 182–3, 184; —, innocence of children, 200; —, magical association of boys/children, 199, 200; and Christianity, 27–8; as common phenomenon, 198–9; divination, 182–3, 188; by Jesus as a child, 185–93, 199, 202. *See also* magic
monotheistic religion. *See under* religion
mosaic decorations: Africans, 166–7, 179–80; animal contests, 130; charioteering, 136; farming, 179; —, agricultural life, 194; gladiatorial and Christian martyr contests with wild animals, 135; hunting, 250–1; marine subjects, 11–12, 17, 152; people, 152; skin colour, 165; slaves, 75, 152, 166, 180

names, 14–15, 45, 48, 138–9, 145
Nock, A.D., 25, 34, 215; *Conversion,* 24; meaning of conversion as absolute change, 26

Octavian. *See* Augustus
Oea, 6, 15, 20, 45; community, nature of, 161–2; culture and language, 14, 48; —, culturally diverse society, 52, 57; description, 46; exports, 7; family life (*see* family life); religion, 48–9; as Roman colony, 49; *Romanitas,* impact of, 57–8; slave trade, 74–5, 170
oratory: and *doctrina,* 55–6; dress, 18, 158; Greek orators, 127, 156; ideal orator, 55, 159–60 limited time to listen to, 194; Roman, 57, 160–1; —, Greek learning as test of ideal Roman orator, 160; —, rhetorical tradition, 156–7; self-presentation, 157, 159; statues, 141; study of philosophy, 54–5. *See also* sophists
Origen, 219; *Contra Celsum,* 216
Orpheus, 27
Orwell, George, 189, 199, 210
Osiris, 23, 33–5, 125, 183, 203, 205, 208, 211–15, 218, 221, 223, 227–8
Ovid, 9, 11, 20, 238; *Fasti,* 9; *Tristia,* 236
owls, 86

Pachrates, 11
paideia. See *doctrina/paideia*
Pan, 223
Pancrates, 11, 16–17, 251
Papinian, 239, 243, 245
parrots, 129
Paul, 239
Paul of Tarsus, 27, 188, 204
Pausanias, 6–7, 37, 155, 224; *Description of Greece,* 99
Perry, B.E., 215
personal appearance: Apuleius, 17–18, 19, 147–8; in Egypt, 156; in *Metamorphoses,* 148–51, 155–6; orators, 18, 157, 158, 159; Roman, 148–9; sophists, 153–4, 159
Petronius: *Satyricon,* 194–5
Phaedrus, 165
Phidias, 155
Philemon, 140

philosophy: debate in an 'age of anxiety,' 216; in education, 54; Greek philosophical tradition as Roman cultural tradition, 54–5; image of philosophy not to be debased, 128; in pursuit of the good life, 129
Philostratus, 18, 129, 154; *Life of Apollonius,* 199; *Lives of the Sophists,* 127, 153
Plotina, 252–3
Plato, 8, 13, 56, 57, 130, 204; demons, 182; erotic poetry, 16; *Parmenides,* 127; *Phaedo,* 16; *Phaedrus,* 127; 'principle of plenitude,' 62; *Symposium,* 127; *Timaeus,* 127
Plautus, 139
Pliny the Elder, 9, 11, 12, 21; adultery, 241; animals, 68, 70; education of children, 197; *Natural History,* 10, 39, 128, 129, 131; orators' self-presentation, 158; Plotina, 252; slaves, 178
Pliny the Younger, 18, 146, 152; curiosity, 212; oratory, 161; *Panegyricus,* 246
Plutarch, 92, 98, 183, 188, 218–19; *On Isis and Osiris,* 218
Pompeii, 167–8, 178, 193, 202
Priapic satire (Horace), 8
Priscian, 255
proconsuls. *See* governors/proconsuls
Propertius, 16
Proserpina, 31, 33
Protagoras, 140
Psyche. *See* Cupid and Psyche
Ptolemaeus, 109
Pudentilla, Aemilia: betrothal to Sicinius Clarus, 43, 44, 46, 50; children, 44, 50, 162; devotion to learning, 57; family and conflict, 43–4, 46, 49–52, 58, 93; first marriage, 43, 50; fortune/wealth, 7, 43, 93, 179; male control, 50–1; married Apuleius, 3, 4–5, 9, 43, 50; —, not for romantic love, 51; —, in Oea, 41; Punic stock, 45; slave-owner, 74, 166, 180; Punic: language, 13, 14–15, 47; —, in Africa Proconsularis, 138–9, 145; —, as a lesser language, 48; —, long survival, 161; —, used publicly, 14–15, 128, 138; Punic names, 45, 138; religion, 49, 137–8, 142–3, 145, 161
Pythagoras, 18, 53, 129–30, 132, 147

Quintilian, 17, 18, 22, 152; *doctrina,* 55–6; *Institute,* 194; oratory/rhetorical tradition, 156–7, 160–1; presentation, 157–8; study of philosophy, 54–5

religion: in 'an age of anxiety,' 215–19; burial practices (*see* burial practices); in Carthage, 36, 137–8, 222; Christianity (*see* Christianity); conversion, 24–30, 213–15; —, absolute change, 26, 27; —, Christian conversion, 29–30; —, definitions and meaning of, 25–6, 30; —, and *Metamorphoses,* 30–5; —, and polytheistic and monotheistic cultures, 25; —, as psychological process, 25, 34; Egyptian, 32, 33, 35, 47, 212–13, 217–18; Greek, 27–8, 32, 47, 218; —, syncretistic quality of Greco-Roman religion, 28, 31; Islam, 27, 30; Judaism (*see* Judaism); local gods in North Africa, 15; and magic, 12, 19, 199; money, 214; monotheistic religion, 25, 26–30, 32, 33, 35; —, portrayed as deviant behaviour, 29; polytheistic religion, 25, 26–7, 28; prophetic religions, 26; Punic, 49, 137–8, 142–3, 145, 161; religious life in North African coastal cities, 46–7; —, Punic element, 47; rival religious systems, 26; Roman, 37, 97, 108, 137–8, 142–3, 220; —, cross-identification of divinities in Roman antiquity, 37; —, divination, 182; —, and Hadrian, 224; —, local gods and Roman gods, 15, 145; —, and magic, 12; —, polytheistic, 38; —,

syncretistic quality of Greco-Roman religion, 28, 31; in Sabratha, 35, 47
rhetorical tradition. *See* oratory
Rome and Roman culture, 220–7; Apuleius in (*see under* Apuleius); architecture, 14–15, 41, 135, 223, 249; Circus Maximus, 134; Colosseum, 4; competition, 135–7, 191; defining Rome/Roman, 93; Egyptian influences/Egyptomania, 221–2; family life (*see* family life); government, 12; governors (*see* governors/proconsuls); history, importance of, 255–6; Isis, cult of, 37, 220–2, 228; law and justice (*see* law and justice); literature, 13, 96; monarchy/emperors, 222, 224–6; —, and cult of Isis, 228; —, military power, 226–7; —, portraiture, 226–7; —, public interest in behaviour, 245–50, 256; orators (*see* oratory); personal aspect, 148–9; poets, 56, 127; pollution, 8; public buildings, 222–3; religion (*see under* religion); Romanization, 19, 57, 139, 161, 163; Romulus and Remus, 221; Sabratha, concordant union with, 4; sensitivity to skin colour, 164–5; —, connotations of black and white, 165–6; slaves (*see* slaves and slave trade); socio-cultural impact on Oea, 41–58; traditional culture/*Romanitas*, 41, 57, 96, 100, 143, 146; urban development, 41, 134–5; virtues, 55, 94–5
roses, 38–40, 64; Rosalia festival, 38–9

Sabratha: as assize centre/court, 4, 20, 151; —, place of trial of Apuleius, 3, 15; culture and language, 14, 15; exports, 7, 20; fishing activities, 20–1, 151; population, 4; remote provincial community, 4; religion, 35, 47; as Roman colony, 49; Rome, concordant union with, 4; slave trade, 74–5; trial of Apuleius (*see* trial of Apuleius for practising magic)
Samos, 53, 129–30
Samothrace, sanctuary at, 6
Saturn, 32, 137
Saturus: *Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicity*, 39
Scillitan martyrs, 104–5, 187
Second Sophistic, 13, 20, 127
Seneca, 90; children, 190, 193, 194, 200
slaves, 62, 70
Septimius Severus, 14, 178, 183, 190, 241, 247
Serapis, 36, 213, 221
Severus Alexander, 27–8
Sextus of Chaeronea, 219
Shumate, Nancy, 25; *Crisis and Conversion in Apuleius'* Metamorphoses, 24
Sicinius Aemilianus, 6, 43, 50–2, 57, 70; charges accusing Apuleius, 3, 5, 7, 9, 43; negotiated hearing of case against Apuleius, 6; pilloried by Apuleius, 13, 164–5, 166, 179. *See also* trial of Apuleius for practising magic
Sicinius Clarus, 43, 44, 46, 50, 52
Sicinius Pontianus, 15, 43, 44, 50–1, 57
Sicinius Pudens, 5, 13, 138, 182
Silvanus, 223
slaves and slave trade, 6, 7, 14, 74–5, 79; adultery, 231, 232, 240–1; —, and torture, 240; animalization of slaves, 59–78; —, associating slaves with animals, 59–60, 75; —, in later slave societies, 61–2, 69–70; —, serving interests of slave-owners, 63; child-minding, 85; children, 85; commodification of slaves, 62, 66, 69–70, 72, 75; demand for slaves, 169–70; disease, 170; in Egypt, 92; eunuchs, 170, 176; families, 82, 91, 232; —, formally unable to marry, 231; —, relationships as marriage, 232; killing another's slave, 60; marginal in society, 200; martyrdom, 116, 122; natural slavery, 59–60; and pleasure, 76–8; position of captive

slaves, 64–5, 67, 89; —, deprived of identity, 69, 75; —, punishment, 65, 67, 69, 73–4; —, response to enslavement, 72–3, 75–6; and race/racial prejudice, 62, 69, 76; slave-owners' relationship with slaves, 72, 75–6, 87–8; slave trade from sub-Saharan Africa, 168–80; —, abolitionist movement, 176; —, conditions endured by slaves in transit, 173–5, 179–80; —, Garamantes' role, 170–2, 177; —, in Roman imperial age, 177–9; —, size of slave trade, 175; —, slave trade routes, 170, 172–3, 175–6; as witnesses, 14, 75, 181
Snowden, F.M., Jr, 167
Solon, 13
sophists, 57, 155, 219, 227; and Apuleius, 127, 128, 130, 153–5; Greek sophists, 54, 128, 130, 139, 153–4; —, symbol of Greek political impotence, 155; personal appearance, 153–4; —, dandyism, 159; sophistry, 21, 130, 155. *See also* oratory
Soranus, 9
Statius Caecilius, 12
stepfathers, 50–1, 93
Stoics/Stoicism, 15, 200, 218, 219
Suetonius, 13, 188, 199, 226, 255; adultery, 238, 245; *Caesares,* 246

Tacita, 9
Tacitus, 92, 96, 198, 222, 238, 255
Tanit, 12, 47, 49, 57, 137; sanctuary, 96–7, 137–8
Tannonius Pudens, 5, 147
Tertullian, 41, 98, 135–6, 214, 219, 251; adultery, 243, 245; *De pallio,* 143; *De pudicitia,* 243; Hadrian, 253
Thales, 132, 140
Theophrastus, 8
Theseus, 155
Thrace, 5
Tiberius, 221, 240
Tibullus, 16
Ticida, 16
Timaeus (Plato), 16
Trajan, 15, 21, 223, 246, 252; adultery, 240, 241
trial of Apuleius for practising magic, 3–4, 7, 35, 41, 49; advocate for Sicinius Aemilianus, 5; Apuleius's defence speech (see *Apology*); charges: —, casting a spell on Thallus the slave, 181–2, 200–2; —, composing erotic poems moral corruption, 16; —, indictment of magic, 5, 7, 8, 21, 147, 162, 166, 181–2, 200–2; —, irrational absurdity of, 3, 7; —, *philosophus formonsus,* 17–18, 147–8; —, reasons for, 20, 57–8; —, setting free slaves, 166; defence (see *Apology*); exhibiting statuette of Mercury in defence, 53; outcome, 3, 20, 43–4; process, 5–6, 7; —, hurried nature, 4–5, 22; slave witnesses, 75
Tripolitania and North Africa, 3, 4, 8, 12, 17; Africa Proconsularis, 3; citizenship, 44, 45; in cultural flux, 14–15, 48, 127–8; —, cultural legacy and *Romanitas,* 45–6; family life (*see* family life); importance of fish to economy and culture, 21; Italian immigration, 44–5; languages, 14; names, 45, olive production, 7; polygamy, 42; preoccupation with warding off evil, 12; —, religious life, 47; Roman law in, 44

Ulpian, 14; adultery, 239; slaves, 60, 231; worship of Egyptian gods, 35

Varro, 181, 190; animals, 68; slaves, 59–60, 64–5
Venus, 30, 31, 38, 85, 144, 152, 254; and Isis, 30, 31; temples, 221, 223, 248
Vespasian, 198–9
Vigellius Saturninus, P., 104, 187
Virgil, 8, 13, 16, 139, 156; *Aeneid,* 135
virtues, Roman, 55, 94–5

Vitruvius, 133
Voltedius Optatus, Q., 135

Winkler, John J.: *Auctor and Actor*, 24
women, 9; adultery (*see* adultery); affairs with slaves, 231–2; female propriety, 95, 245, 246 guardians, 5, 44, 253; marginal in society, 200; marriage and remarriage (*see* marriage) ; preventing misfortune, 95; as widows, 41–2; —, adultery, 239; —, male control, 50–1; —, mourning periods, 79, 95; —, reality of early widowhood, 79–80; —, stigma, 84

Xenophon, 59

Zacchaeus, 195–6
Zen, 32
Zeno of Elea, 18, 147
Zeus, 32, 213, 217, 249

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